

wood stars
to
urn a deal

GELES (AFP) — Julia Roberts, Ford, Madonna and other Hollywood stars are lobbying to over-see a deal between the state and the Lumber Company to destroy old-growth redwood trees. The deal, a letter written by Harrelson says, plan to conserve 100 acres of timberland as part of an overall reforestation project. "We appreciate the fact that this deal is not for the forest and is left to taxpayers," the deal.

urite
spoon of
non is up
uction

ELONA (AFP) — Item of sentimental value to slain Beate John is coming up for auction — his favourite spoon. According to his wife Cynthia, the spoon was used to stir soup with one participant. The object of affection is part of a record memorabilia auction in November on, who was gunned down in 1980, bought the spoon at the upmarket London store Harrods. The auction will also include Rolling Stone memorabilia.

onna: Fame
a drug

YORK (AFP) — Madonna, who has achieved a but today the company's celebrity status to "g" according to the New York Post. "Madonna is a god," the Post says. "She is a space and gives you an impression that you are in a room with her, when actually it's the opposite. She exhausts you and finally depletes you. The single mother of a fighter, she named her child 'Lucky' after taking up her relationship with men."

Pacino plays
n anti-tobacco
rusader in a
ew movie

OS ANGELES (AFP) — Actor Al Pacino has played a fair number of bad guys, notably in the "Godfather" trilogy. In his new movie, he is an anti-tobacco crusader. Pacino plays a television journalist in the movie about a former cigarette company vice president who turns against the tobacco industry. Set in New Orleans, the movie is a thriller. "I'm playing a character who is a crusader," Pacino said. "He's a former cigarette company vice president who turns against the tobacco industry. Set in New Orleans, the movie is a thriller. 'I'm playing a character who is a crusader,' Pacino said. 'He's a former cigarette company vice president who turns against the tobacco industry. Set in New Orleans, the movie is a thriller.'"

Youngest son
of Robert
F. Kennedy marries
school teacher

NANTUCKET (AP) — Surrounded by family members dressed in mourning suits and white-clothed caskets, the youngest son of the late Robert F. Kennedy married a school teacher Saturday. Kennedy, a former U.S. senator, died in 1968. His son, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., is a Vermont native who is a teacher at a private school in New York's Dutchess County.

Israel demolishes Arab structures

JERICHO (R) — Israeli authorities on Monday demolished five Palestinian structures in the West Bank which they said were built without permits. "These structures were built illegally. All the demolitions followed legal procedures," said Peter Lerner, spokesman for Israel's military-run Civil Administration in the occupied West Bank. The structures, all in the Jordan Valley, included a house north of the town of Jericho. Its owner, Imad Ibrahim Sarhan, said it was the third time the house had been demolished by Israel. Lerner said it was only the second time it had been torn down. "I will rebuild and I will stay on this land," Sarhan said outside the ruins of his home. A cattle pen owned by Sarhan's father and three shacks used by farmers were also demolished, witnesses said.

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U.S. opposes U.N. probe in Sudan Bashir says he received U.S. invitation to cooperate

WASHINGTON (R) — On Monday, the U.S. expressed opposition to a Sudanese request for a U.N. investigation to verify that a factory destroyed by U.S. missiles produced chemical arms. U.S. charge d'affaires to the United Nations Peter Burleigh was asked by AFP for his reaction to the Sudanese proposal for a U.N. fact-finding mission, ahead of a U.N. Security Council meeting that is due to discuss the issue.

"We'll have to discuss it in the council. But we don't see any point to it," Burleigh replied. Washington has veto power in the 15-member council as one of the five permanent members — which are Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

But Chinese deputy permanent representative Shen Guofeng told reporters: "We understand that [Sudan's] position. We hope that the United States will give some strong evidence to prove that this factory is producing some poisonous gas."

A U.S. official ruled out any presentation of evidence during the council's closed-door meeting on Monday. The Al-Shifa factory on the outskirts of Khartoum was completely destroyed in Thursday's attack by cruise missiles fired by U.S. warships in the Red Sea.

The Sudanese government on Monday announced the recall of its ambassador from London and demanded that London order its ambassador to leave Khartoum, the British Foreign Office said.

The decision was made following British support for the American military operation.

A Russian diplomat said that

Moscow had "no definite position yet" on the Sudanese request.

Non-permanent member Sweden also had no final position. But Swedish diplomats noted that technical experts, and not diplomats, would have to be involved.

Khartoum is also seeking compensation from Washington for the attack which caused an estimated \$100 million worth of damage, and a condemnation by the council of the U.S. action.

Meanwhile, Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir said Monday that the United States has asked to open security cooperation with Sudan and assured it last week's attack on a Khartoum factory was aimed at terrorism, not at the Sudanese government.

He made the comments in his first news conference since Thursday's strike on the factory saying the U.S. government had communicated with Sudan through a third party, which he would not name, to say that his country was "not targeted in the attack, but terrorism."

"They also said that they wanted cooperation between the Sudanese and the American security apparatus, and this happens for the first time although they have refused a similar request we made in the past," Bashir said.

U.S. officials have not said anything publicly about renewing cooperation with Sudan, which it accuses of being a terrorist sponsoring state. American officials have not made clear if they are accusing Sudan of being linked to the targeted factory.

Bashir said that Ben Laden "has no shares at all in the factory," adding Ben Laden left Sudan before the factory was opened in 1996. Ben Laden lived in Sudan in the early 1990s but was forced out under Western pressure in 1995.

He added that the Americans based the attack on wrong information supplied by dissidents who have opposed his Islamist rule since he came to power in a coup in 1989.

"The American agencies have counted on erroneous information from some groups... in return for giving them money," he said, calling the opposition groups "traitors and agents



A Sudanese woman prepares nuts to sell during a protest by other women against the U.S. in a public square in Khartoum on Monday (Reuters photo)

Arab League condemns U.S. raid

CAIRO (AFP) — The Arab League on Monday condemned the U.S. raid on a pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum and called on the United States to respect international law and refrain from such actions.

A resolution passed unanimously by the 22 members of the Cairo-based Arab League at an emergency session here "condemned the American bombardment of the Al Shifa pharmaceutical factory as an aggression against Sudan."

The organisation also called on the United States to "respect international law and refrain from such actions [which] provoke indignation and encourage a spiral of violence."

Monday's session was called by Sudan, which currently holds the rotating presidency of the Arab League, to discuss the U.S. bombing of the pharmaceutical factory which Washington alleges was producing ingredients for VX nerve gas.

Ahead of the meeting, Iraq's representative, Nabil Negin, said Baghdad would "call for a united Arab stand against the barbaric American aggression, which is part of its policy of compromising security in the Arab World."

The Al Shifa factory on the outskirts of Khartoum was completely destroyed on Thursday by cruise missiles fired by U.S. warships in the Red

Sea. One worker was killed and seven injured according to plant officials. U.S. President Bill Clinton's national security advisor, Sandy Berger, said Sunday that the factory "was used to create a chemical that was used in the manufacture of VX nerve gas and has no other commercial distribution."

Sudanese government officials and Al Shifa executives vehemently rejected the U.S. allegations and many Muslim nations have expressed outrage at the attack on Sudan.

The missiles launched Thursday also targeted sites in Afghanistan linked to Osama Ben Laden, a Saudi extremist who Washington says masterminded the terror bombings at U.S. embassies in east Africa two weeks ago which left more than 250 people dead, including a dozen Americans.

Clinton has sought to mollify Muslims and Bill Richardson, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, said Sunday that Washington had in fact won widespread support among Islamic states.

"We have won a lot of support, especially in the Islamic World," Richardson said. Richardson said the United States is opposed to Monday's U.N. Security Council meeting to discuss a Sudanese protest at the missile strikes, but stands "ready to debate those [issues] with anybody."

Despite his criticism of the Clinton administration, Bashir insisted private U.S. enterprises were not threatened in his country.

"We have no animosity towards the American people and non-government agencies," he said. "Our measures are aimed at the American government and not the people."

He declined to elaborate on what measures he might take against the government.

Tarawneh off to U.S. to brief King on Cabinet's policy statement

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh Monday left for the U.S. saying that he will brief His Majesty King Hussein in Washington about a working plan which will serve as the new government's policy statement to be submitted to the Lower House of Parliament.

The government will concentrate its efforts on local issues to learn about the people's real problems and the public should be involved in finding solutions to problems, Tarawneh noted.

Tarawneh, who is accompanied on his trip by Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani, said that field work enables the responsible officials to better understand issues on the ground and that it can help avert problems before they occur.

Referring to the new government's plans and programmes, Tarawneh said that the government's performance will be transparent because it will not only discuss issues but will also present them to the public, inviting their participation in

the decision making process.

"The main problems facing us, which King Hussein has referred to in his letter of designation to the government, do not require short term solutions but they are rather constant issues plaguing the country and its people, particularly poverty and unemployment," added Tarawneh.

Such issues, he added, cannot be solved through decisions coming from the Council of Ministers but require all out efforts involving every citizen in all sectors.

"The government acting through its jurisdiction according to the provisions of the Constitution has its own authorities with which it can steer this process in the right direction and therefore the government will make its moves to deal with these issues which require cooperation from all people," the prime minister added.

Tarawneh said "there are issues like corruption which

affect our society, but these are not deep rooted in our country. Our country is clean and our citizens are clean from corruption, but we will search for corruption with the purpose of stemming it from its roots."

Tarawneh said that he will listen to King Hussein's directives which he will present to the Cabinet upon his return for implementation and will convey the ministers' greetings wishing the King a speedy recovery.

Tarawneh said that the King is constantly following up on the Kingdom's affairs adding that HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, is constantly briefing the King on all details.

The prime minister was seen off by Cabinet members and some officials.

A Royal Decree was issued Monday appointing Minister of State for Development Affairs, Taher Kanaan, as acting prime minister during Tarawneh's absence abroad.

U.K., U.S. to propose action after failed Iraq mission

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Britain and the United States announced Monday that they would propose U.N. Security Council action to punish Baghdad for refusing to cooperate with U.N. arms inspectors.

U.S. charge d'affaires, Peter Burleigh, said that a draft resolution would propose the suspension of the U.N. Security Council's regular sanctions review, which would effectively leave a crippling oil embargo in place indefinitely.

The council last Thursday rolled over the eight-year-old U.N. sanctions for a further two-month period.

The U.S. and British proposals aim to punish Baghdad for failing to abide by U.N. disarmament requirements, which provide for Iraq to give immediate and unconditional access to the U.N. weapons inspectors.

U.N. special envoy Prakash Shah informed the 15 council members at their closed-door session on Monday that during talks in Baghdad last week, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz had stood firm on Iraq's August 5 decision to suspend cooperation with the arms monitors.

Shah "basically said to the

council that he got nowhere," Burleigh told reporters.

But diplomats said that Iraq had left the door open to dialogue with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan and with the United Nations, which is operating a humanitarian scheme with Iraq as a temporary exemption to the sanctions regime.

Burleigh, and British deputy permanent representative Stephen Gomersall, said their delegations would be consulting other council members later this week on a draft resolution.

Burleigh said: "We're suggesting suspension of sanctions review until Iraq comes back into cooperation with IAEA and UNSCOM."

Under U.N. resolutions, the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) must certify the dismantling of all Iraqi weapons of mass destruction before the eight-year old oil embargo can be lifted.

Iraq insists that it no longer holds any weapons of mass destruction, and that the sanctions should be lifted forthwith.

Iraqi Ambassador Nizar Hamdoun reiterated here on Monday that "Iraq still stands by its fifth

of August decision" to suspend cooperation with the IAEA and UNSCOM, and was waiting to see whether the council addressed Iraqi concerns.

He said that it would be "almost impossible to keep any meaningful cooperation with UNSCOM" until the agency had been restructured.

Iraq is demanding the replacement of UNSCOM chief Richard Butler and the transfer to Geneva or Vienna of UNSCOM headquarters in order to dilute perceived U.S. influence.

Butler, an Australian diplomat, attended Monday's discussions, but did not speak, according to participants.

The five permanent council members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — remain divided over how to approach the latest crisis.

China, France and Russia believe that the council should encourage Iraq to cooperate with the U.N. inspectors, while Britain and the United States continue to take a hard line.

China and France on Monday notably expressed support for a proposal by Annan for a comprehensive review of the sanctions regime.

Oslo anniversary finds Israeli leaders as divided as ever

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli lawmakers laid bare Monday their deep differences over troubled negotiations with the Palestinians, casting a shadow over ceremonies in Norway marking the fifth anniversary of the Oslo peace accords.

Members of parliament from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing coalition and the opposition traded barbs and insults during a special session called during the legislature's summer recess to debate rising violence and tensions linked to the deadlock in the peace process.

The Knesset session came just hours before Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and former Israeli Premier Shimon Peres were scheduled to attend an official ceremony in the Norwegian capital marking the August 20, 1993 conclusion of secret negotiations which led to the Oslo peace accords.

Underlining his hostility to the self-rule agreements signed

by his Labour Party predecessors, Netanyahu refused an invitation to participate in the Oslo ceremony.

His spokesman explained that the prime minister was "too busy to be carried away by such nostalgia."

Danny Naveh, the close associate Netanyahu has put in charge of negotiations with the Palestinians, was even more blunt.

"The government accepts the reality brought about by the Oslo agreement but it certainly doesn't see it as a reason to celebrate," he said.

The Oslo peace accord, called the Declaration of Principles, launched a five-year interim process of expanding Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

But since Netanyahu came to power in June 1996, implementation of the Oslo timetable has ground to a halt.

Israel has balked at carrying out promised further transfers

of West Bank land to self-rule and has expanded Jewish settlement on lands where the Palestinians hoped to create their own state.

In the Knesset Monday, Netanyahu's allies showed no regret over the stalemate in speeches peppered with anti-Arab remarks.

"The sea remains the sea and Arabs remain Arabs, if they could, they would massacre us," said Reuven Rivlin, a deputy from Netanyahu's Likud Party.

Communications Minister Limor Livnat, speaking for the government, accused the now-opposition Labour Party of sending Israel down the path to disaster by signing the Oslo peace deal when it was in power under the late Premier Yitzhak Rabin.

"You had to choose between shame and war, you chose shame and you will also have war," she said.

Israel softens position on withdrawal

Arafat: Israeli pullout offer 'a beginning'

TEL AVIV (AP) — In a sign of behind-the-scenes progress, Israel has softened its position on a key precondition for withdrawing from more land in the West Bank, an official said Monday.

The report of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new flexibility on procedure comes as U.S. envoy Dennis Ross is exploring the possibility of a new round of mediation to wrap up the long-stalled withdrawal agreement.

Hardliners in Netanyahu's coalition, meanwhile, renewed threats to topple the government if he acceded to a U.S. proposal to hand over an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank to Palestinian control.

According to an Israeli official who spoke on condition of anonymity, Israel told U.S. negotiators that it would now agree to start the withdrawal process without a new meeting of the 545-member Palestine National Council (PNC).

Netanyahu has demanded the PNC be reconvened to remove ambiguity about whether it had cancelled clauses in the PLO founding charter which call for Israel's destruction.

Palestinians have maintained the PNC already took action to revoke the charter. The official said Israel was now willing to accept a statement from the 18-member PLO Executive Committee as a condition for starting the withdrawal as long as a date for reconvening the PNC would fall within the four-month period of phased pullbacks.

Netanyahu's office issued a statement denying an Israeli newspaper report that the prime minister had reversed his stand on the PLO charter.

It said that Netanyahu spoke to U.S. President Bill Clinton about the issue

Friday and said that amending the charter "is a basic condition of the agreement with the Palestinians." In the Norwegian capital of Oslo, Ross was expected to meet with Palestinian National Authority President Yasser Arafat and Netanyahu's advisers. Afterwards, U.S. officials are expected to weigh the feasibility of a new Mideast shuttle mission.

"We've had a stalemate for a very long time, and it's very important that we overcome that stalemate," Ross said in an interview with the Norwegian state broadcast network NRK.

Palestinian officials said a new, exploratory channel had been opened between Netanyahu confidant Yitzhak Molcho, and Ahmad Qureia, the speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council. They also said Israel was backing away

from previous positions. "The Israelis called us and said we have something new we want to show you. They said, 'we have abandoned our demand for the convening of the PNC' and said that they are willing to withdraw from 13 per cent," said Nabil Shaath, a minister in Arafat's cabinet and a top negotiator.

That would not resolve all the issues, however. Palestinian officials said they were not ready to accept Israeli conditions on the use of three per cent of the land targeted for the next withdrawal. They also said Arafat would not drop his insistence on a further pullback beyond the 13 per cent.

Palestinians also refuse to give up demands for further prisoner releases. David, Bar-Ilan, a top aide to

Arafat, said Israel was "continuing its policy of non-compliance" of the Oslo accords under Netanyahu, who did not attend the commemoration in Oslo.

Among other speakers were former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who shared the 1994 Peace Prize with Arafat and slain Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, U.S. mediator Dennis Ross and Norwegian mediators.

The historic peace accords were initiated in Oslo on Aug. 20, 1993 after 14 secret rounds of talks brokered by a tiny group of Norwegians.

Ross said some progress had been made to revive the talks after 18 months of deadlock.

"We won't have a breakthrough until we have an agreement. There are differences, even though they are narrower than they were some weeks ago. We hope we can find a way to overcome those differences," he said.

Arafat urged the United States to reaffirm its initiative for Israeli withdrawals, which the Palestinians have agreed to, and "to name the party responsible for the current stalemate."

Netanyahu said Israel was awaiting a detailed plan from the Palestinians on how they were going to crack down on militants and prevent terrorism.

"At this point, they haven't presented a plan of action, and they are resisting doing so," Bar-Ilan told the Associated Press.

Netanyahu said in an interview with Fox News television that the process had reached a "critical stage." A group of 11 hard liners in Netanyahu's coalition, meanwhile, called a meeting in the Knesset Monday in response to Israeli media reports of progress in the negotiations.

The group, known as the greater land of Israel front, has pledged to topple Netanyahu's government should he agree to a 13 per cent pullback.

Saudi Arabia says terrorism should be addressed through U.N.

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia, in its first public reaction to the U.S. missile strikes in Sudan and Afghanistan, said on Monday terrorism should be countered by the United Nations through "agreed international action."

Quoting a statement from the cabinet, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said the government had repeated its condemnation of the U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania on Aug. 7 which preceded the U.S. strikes.

"While the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia understands the motivation behind measures aimed at striking the formation and

training bases for terrorists, it expresses its concern at the ramifications and is prompted to stress the need to address the issues through mechanisms of the United Nations," SPA said after the weekly cabinet meeting.

Thursday's missile strikes provoked criticism from many Muslim states, who called for a U.N. response to terrorism rather than unilateral action.

The cabinet said the kingdom understood the "grave results arising from terrorist activities."

But it added that it "believes the only way to fight terrorism is through agreed international action within the framework of

the United Nations."

Saudi Arabia has been the site of two previous anti-U.S. bombings. In 1995, a car bomb in Riyadh killed five Americans. In 1996 an attack on a military housing complex in the eastern city of Khobar killed 19 U.S. servicemen.

The United States has branded Islamic militant Osama Bin Laden, who is now in Afghanistan, as the prime suspect in those two bombings, and has also said he had a role in the East Africa embassy attacks.

The United States has about 4,500 military personnel based in Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter.

Sudan court acquits leaders of outlawed party

KHARTOUM (AFP) — A Khartoum court has acquitted four leaders of the outlawed United party's religious wing of charges they incited violence, endangered public order and spread false information.

Judge Khalid Abdul Gadir of the Ordman criminal court, in a Sunday session, dismissed the charges as baseless, saying any Sudanese had the right to criticize the government and express views on public issues.

"This right is provided for in the 1991 law and is guaranteed by the constitution and, moreover, the Sudanese are accustomed to criticizing their government," the judge said.

Prosecutor Usan Abdel Gadir said that he would appeal the ruling.

Charges against the imam, or prayer leader, Adam Ahmed Yousuf, and three members of the committee of the Ansar sect mosque focused on a sermon read during Friday prayers last month which the prosecutor said criticized the government, called for violence and contained false information.

The judge ruled he saw no call for violence in the sermon. "On the contrary, it has denounced violence," he said.

Worshippers neither demonstrated nor rioted after the sermon but had merely chanted their customary slogans of Allahu Akbar, or God is great.

The 40-member defence council, headed by lawyer Ali Mahmoud Hassanin of the Democratic Unionist Party and including former vice-president Abdel Aftar, expressed satisfaction with the ruling.

Muslims protest strikes outside U.S. embassy

TEL AVIV (AP) — In a protest Monday outside the U.S. embassy, leaders of the Islamist movement in Israel condemned the American air strikes against suspected terrorist strongholds in Sudan and Afghanistan as an attack on all Muslims.

The protest drew about 30 people, including Mohammad Damash, the deputy leader of the Islamist movement which is becoming increasingly influential among Israel's 1 million Arab citizens.

About 50 police officers guarded the embassy but did not try to push back the demonstrators who held banners reading "We won't forgive and we won't forget" and "Clinton kills innocent people in cold blood."

"We are here to protest the American attack. We see it as an attack against all Muslims," Damash said.

In a separate protest, about 70 members of the

Islamic Jihad group chanted "Death to America" and burned four U.S. and two Israeli flags in Gaza City.

Nafiz Azzam, the spiritual leader of Islamic Jihad in the Palestinian areas, said the United States could expect retribution for the strikes. "It is natural and necessary that there be revenge for the blood of Muslims," Azzam said.

The anti-American rallies in the Palestinian areas have been relatively small in scale — in sharp contrast to earlier this year when thousands of Palestinians took to the streets in support of Iraq in its showdown with the United States over weapons inspections.

Iraq's confrontation with the United States was widely perceived as an Arab issue, while the Palestinian don't feel such close ties to Sudan and Afghanistan which are Muslim but not considered key players in the Arab World.

Former Iranian prison chief to receive official funeral

TEHRAN (AFP) — Assadollah Lajevardi, the former Iranian prison chief known by supporters as a "hero of the resistance" and by foes as the "Butcher of Tehran," will be given an official funeral outside parliament Tuesday.

Lajevardi, gunned down at his tailor's shop in Tehran's Grand Bazaar Sunday by two assassins, was "one of the soldiers of the revolution and the people and the regime," President Mohammad Khatami said.

His funeral, originally scheduled for one of the largest mosques in the capital, will now be held outside parliament, state radio announced Monday.

The Grand Bazaar was also closed Tuesday in his honour.

State radio said Lajevardi was shot by "counter-revolutionary elements" and described the slain prison director as "an untiring and pioneering crusader for freedom and independence and a celebrated religious man."

The official IRNA news agency said the assassins opened fire on the former prison chief "after engaging him in a conversation."

Police said one of the two assassins was arrested immediately after the attack, which also left two other people dead — Lajevardi's former deputy, Ashgar Rezaei, and a passer-by.

Turkish mafia arrest reveals further state-crime links

ANKARA (AP) — Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit has confirmed that a prominent crime figure avoided arrest and traveled freely around the world using a diplomatic passport, reports said Monday.

Alaattin Cakici, wanted in Turkey on charges of murder, was nabbed Aug. 17 in a hotel in Nice by French police, Turkey is preparing to ask for his extradition.

Ecevit said the diplomatic passport was given to Cakici by an intelligence official at the Turkish embassy in Beijing, China, Milliyet newspaper reported.

The disclosure was the latest episode in a wider scandal surrounding state-underworld links and raised calls for a deeper investigation to unravel state officials links to the crime

world.

Last year, a government report concluded that the state had hired right-wing terrorists to carry out covert operations against national threats. The document said the death squads later grew out of control, carrying out attacks on their own initiatives and dabbling in mafia-style crime.

The scandal has so far involved two parliamentary deputies, a dozen policemen and an army sergeant. Many more are believed to be involved.

The opposition centre-right True Path Party has claimed Cakici was in contact with two lawmakers of the ruling Motherland Party.

Social democrat politician Filiz Saglar said he would ask Parliament to probe Cakici's relationships with state officials.



HEBRON UNDER CURFEW: A Palestinian looks through the window of his home Monday during the curfew imposed by Israeli troops in parts of the West Bank town of Hebron. The curfew started four days ago after a Jewish settler was stabbed to death by a suspected Palestinian militant (AFP photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Encounter at Turkish-Iranian border

ANKARA (AFP) — The wife of a Turkish minister was "manhandled" by border guards after she refused to cover her head for a visit to Iran, the Turkish press reported Monday. Hikmet Sami Turk, a junior minister for external relations, was visiting the eastern border region of Turkey, accompanied by his wife, when he was invited to cross the frontier into Bazargan in Iran by local officials. Iranian border guards ordered his wife, Fatos Turk, to cover her hair with a headscarf, the Islamic custom for women in Iran. She refused, the dailies Milliyet and Radikal reported, and was jostled by border guards who tried to prevent her accompanying her husband across the border. The press said she had been outraged by the "brutal attitude" of the guards. Turk turned back to remain with his wife.

Five more dead in Algeria violence

ALGIERS (AFP) — Five teenagers were found murdered Monday in the Al Biar district of Algiers, Algerian security services announced. There were no further details of the incident immediately available. The announcement was made in a security forces' communiqué under a section reserved for crimes linked to the clashes between the government and Islamic extremists.

Israel moves border police to Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel announced Monday that it was moving the headquarters of its paramilitary border police from the Tel Aviv region to Jerusalem, a shift which will put 250 more officers on the streets of the disputed city. The decision was taken at a meeting Sunday attended by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Public Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani and Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, according to a statement released by Netanyahu's office. "It was decided that the border police headquarters would be moved from Lod to Jerusalem, thereby also allowing 250 border police officers to contribute to the security of the capital," the statement said.

Eleven PKK rebels killed

DIYARBAKIR (AFP) — Eleven rebels from the separatist Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) were killed Sunday in a Turkish security operation in the southeast province of Batman, an official source at Diyarbakir announced Monday. According to a police statement, the Kurds were killed near Kozluk, 50 kilometres northeast of Diyarbakir, where the fight against the rebels is being coordinated.

Ramtha residents complain of hazards posed by trucks

AMMAN (J.T.) — Officials and residents of the northern border town of Ramtha have complained that the continued presence of more than 2,000 trucks in the municipality is creating environmental hazards and other problems for local citizens.

Ramtha's Deputy District Governor Qassem Mheidat said the trucks, which are permanently parked within the city's boundaries and on side streets, are not only dangerous to residents but also damage the environment and the town's infrastructure and continually cause traffic jams.

Demanding that the trucks be moved outside the town, Mheidat said the public safety committee in Ramtha helped build a parking lot for the trucks outside the town.

But according to Ramtha Mayor Abdul Aziz Thiyyab, truck-owners and drivers prefer to park the trucks close to their houses inside the town, even though he said the parking lot is supplied with electricity and telephone services.

Thiyyab added that the municipality is continually patching up roads damaged by the trucks.

Ramtha resident Ghazi Zou'bi, director of the town's health department, said local inhabitants are concerned for their children's safety in the Ramtha streets.

The trucks emit poisonous gases that pollute the atmosphere and leak diesel oil on the streets, constituting a permanent danger to the public, especially children, said Zou'bi.

Mahmoud Zou'bi, another town resident and head of the Ramtha branch of the Jordan Environment Society (JES), echoed the complaint, saying that the vehicles' emissions are among the main causes of pollution in the town.

He said that the JES will work in conjunction with the concerned authorities to find a suitable solution to the problem to prevent pollution. The JES will also plant trees along the main roads to help cleanse the atmosphere, he added.

According to Ramtha inhabitants, the trucks, which transport goods from Turkey and Syria in the north to the Gulf countries in the south, constitute the main source of income for the townpeople.

JORDAN TELEVISION

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PROGRAMME TWO

15:00 ...Cartoon — The Pink Panther
15:30 ...Small Talk — "Quiz Show"
16:00 ...Border Town
16:30 ...Doc. — Baby It's You
17:00 ...Doc. — Skeleton Coast
18:00 ...French Programmes — Les Cœurs Brûlés
19:00 ...Le Journal
19:15 ...French Programme — Fractale
19:30 ...News headlines
19:35 ...Step by Step — "Do the Right Thing"
20:00 ...What Would You Do?
20:30 ...Encounter
21:10 ...Mini-series — An Independent Man (Ep. 4)
22:00 ...News in English
22:30 ...Feature film — Unconquered
23:59 ...Metro Café
00:30 ...End of T.V.

PRAYER TIMES

04:39 ...Fair
06:01 ...Sunrise/Duha
12:38 ...Dhuhr
16:15 ...Asr
19:14 ...Maghrib
20:56 ...Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweiffah, Tel. 5920740

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624500

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4623366

Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811

St. Alfred Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 4771751

Amman International Church Tel. 5865897

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4634932

St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 466138

Church of Presentation, Sweiffah Tel. 5921146

The United Catholic Church Tel. 4624757

The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4611190

Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679

The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052

The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 4771331

The American Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Normal to release hot weather conditions will prevail with winds northwesterly moderate.

In Amman it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Amman ... 20/35

Aqaba ... 26/38

Deserts ... 18/37

Jordan Valley ... 26/39

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 34, Aqaba 38 Humidity readings: Amman 21 per cent, Aqaba 48 per cent.

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun ... 28

Jerash ... 34

Um Qays ... 35

Madaba ... 34

Petra ... 36

Dead Sea ... 40

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Bahjat Bader ... 533242

Dr. Naser Ibrahim ... 5350432

Dr. Wafiq Qaddumi ... 4693542

Dr. Khalil Al Tash ... 4757253

Al Asma pharmacy ... 4637055

Al Salam pharmacy ... 4636734

Shmeisat pharmacy ... 4637661

Nabroukh pharmacy ... 4623672

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Tamaheh ... 252622

Al Quds pharmacy ... 471

ZARQA:

Dr. Tariq Hijawal ... 985417

Khalifah pharmacy ... 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ... 4637111

Civil Defence Department ... 5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue ... 4630341

Civil Defence Emergency ... 199

Rescue Police 192 ... 4621111

4637777

Fire Brigade ... 4617101

Blood Bank ... 4751212

Highway Police ... 5343402

Traffic Police ... 4896340

Price Complaints ... 5661176

Hotel Complaints ... 5805801

Water & Sewerage Complaints ... 4897467

Amman Municipality Complaints ... 4757111

Telephone Information (Directory assistance) ... 121

Overseas Calls ... 010291

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs ... 4623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs ... 5661111

Jordan Television ... 4773111

Radio ... 4774111

Water Authority ... 5680111

J. Electricity Authority ... 5815615

Electric Power Co. ... 4636381

RJ Flight Information ... 44-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport ... 44-53201

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery ... 5921191

The Islamic Abdi ... 5666317

Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 5858586

Lazaria ... 4630195

Khalid Maternity ... 4642816

Jabal Amman Maternity ... 4642362

Mallat, J. Amman ... 4636140

Palestine, Shmeisat ... 5617071

Shmeisat Hospital ... 5669131

University Hospital ... 5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital ... 5667277

Al-Ahli, Abdali ... 5664164

Italian, Al-Mulajireen ... 4771013

Al-Bashir ... 4775112

Army, Marka ... 4891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital ... 5602240/50

Amal Hospital ... 5674155

ZARQA:

Genl. Hospital ... 010983323

Zarqa National Hospital

02-45 ... Riyadh (add) (RJ)

03:20 ... Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

09:00 ... Cairo (MS)

11:30 ... Kuwait (add) (KU)

13:00 ... Riyadh (SV)

13:30 ... Aden (TY)

14:25 ... Munich (LH)

15:00 ... Istanbul (TK)

16:10 ... Bahrain, Doha (GF)

16:10 ... Dubai (EK)

18:05 ... Kiev (AU)

19:00 ... Paris (AF)

20:25 ... Tel Aviv (LY)

22:30 ... Beirut (ME)

23:35 ... Lameca (CY)

23:40 ... Amsterdam (KL)

00:55 ... Bucharest (RO)

03:00 ... Rome (AZ)

04:25 ... London (BA)

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:00 ... Damascus (RJ)

07:10 ... Tehran (RJ)

08:05 ... San'a (RJ)

08:40 ... Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

09:25 ... Doha (add) (RJ)

10:40 ... Muscat, Dubai (RJ)

10:45 ... Al Ain, Bahrain (RJ)

11:25 ... Beirut

12:10 ... Beirut (add) (RJ)

17:40 ... Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

18:30 ... Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

Opposition divided on direction of dialogue following Regent's meeting with Brotherhood

By Francesca Chajci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN (J.T.) — The opposition welcomed Sunday's meeting between HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Muslim Brotherhood leaders, but was divided on the priorities on the agenda and the means for the resumption of a national dialogue.

While the powerful Muslim Brotherhood remained entrenched behind its demands for freezing the 1994 Wadi Araba treaty and halting normalisation with Israel, other opposition parties, including the Brotherhood's political arm, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), extended an open hand to the newly-appointed government of Faysal Tarawneh and declared their readiness to engage in constructive talks for the advancement of democracy.

"We welcome [Sunday's] meeting with Crown Prince Hassan," said the Brotherhood's overall

leader, Abdul Majeed Thneibat. "But we stress that we want a dialogue that would lead to solutions to the problems we presented, not a dialogue for the sake of dialogue."

During the meeting, Thneibat presented the Regent with a memorandum clarifying the Brotherhood's views on a host of political, economic and social issues.

"We demanded more public freedoms through changes to the press and election laws," Thneibat told the Jordan Times in a telephone interview on Monday.

"[The memorandum] also asked for re-examining the investment law, which we believe threatens the country's security by removing all barriers to foreign [and Israeli] investments."

"We demand that normalisation be halted in order to improve relations with other Arab states, and Wadi Araba be frozen, because it is greatly harming national unity," he said.

Prince Hassan's meeting with Thneibat and the Muslim Brotherhood's executive committee, the first such public meeting since 1995, conformed with the Hashemite policy of maintaining dialogue with all shades and sectors of society — a phenomenon which analysts agree is a rarity in this region.

Thneibat said the meeting was only the first of a series of projected exchanges aimed at breaking the 11-month deadlock in government-opposition relations.

"The Regent promised to read the memorandum and meet [with us] again," said Thneibat.

In contrast with the Brotherhood's "wait and see" attitude, opposition party leaders voiced their enthusiasm for the Regent's move and his declared intent to meet in the coming days with representatives of different parties, unions and other civic institutions as well as journalists.

Only one day after Prince Hassan's meeting with the Brotherhood, many party leaders said they had already started drafting possible memoranda to forward to the Regent or the government as a basis for a national dialogue.

Normalisation of ties with Israel — the thorny issue in government-

public freedoms, which it said received a heavy blow with the one-person, one-vote electoral system introduced in 1993 and the "draconian" press bill, endorsed by Parliament last week and still awaiting Royal ratification.

"Recent issues such as water and food security for all citizens" come next on the agenda that the IAF would like to discuss in a possible meeting with the Regent, Arabiyat said.

Then, "there is the need for enhancing relations with our Muslim and Arab brothers," said Arabiyat, citing embargo-stricken Iraq and Sudan. However, he did not mention the Kingdom's relations with Israel.

"Surely leadership and opposition have their differences, especially when it comes to relations with Israel, but we need to move on and build on our common goals," said Deputy Mohammad Ouan (Tafleh), who is also secretary general of the leftist Arab

Land Party.

"[The opposition] cannot just sit aside and criticise relations with Israel. We can participate in solving other matters, such as poverty, unemployment and freedoms," said Ouan.

At a meeting with deputies, senators, and members of the newly-appointed cabinet of Faysal Tarawneh on Saturday, Prince Hassan had declared that the doors of the Royal Palace would be open for responsible dialogue with all parties.

King Hussein had previously indicated the resumption of a national dialogue as one of the tasks of the new government in his letter of designation to Tarawneh late last week.

The outgoing government of Abdul Salam Majali had failed to resume dialogue with the opposition since the latter's boycott of the November 1997 general elections. "It is still too early to say whether a dialogue will succeed,

but we are optimistic because this government not only seems more willing [to engage in a dialogue] than the previous one, but it has also received a clear mandate to this extent," said the secretary general of the Jordan Communist Party (JCP), Munir Hamarneh.

Opposition leaders ranged from cautiously to openly optimistic in predicting the course of pluralism and public freedoms under the Tarawneh government, which includes a younger generation of politicians.

"It is a promising start: His Majesty's letter of designation and Tarawneh's reply [to the King's letter], in addition to the Regent's meeting with the Brotherhood and the announcement that such meetings will continue with other parties, all raise hopes that a solid dialogue will start," said Arabiyat.

"We will wait and see, but we are hopeful," said Suleiman Arar, secretary general of the pan-Arabist Al Mustaqbal.

Prosecutor charges man with premeditated murder of daughter

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Criminal Prosecutor yesterday charged a 55-year-old man with the premeditated murder of his daughter and the shooting injury of a man in the Hussein Camp in another apparent "honour crime" in the Kingdom, official sources said Monday.

The suspect, Jumah M., surrendered to police on Sunday three hours after allegedly shooting and killing his daughter Nabilah, 35, and then shooting and injuring a 52-year-old man for reasons of "honour," one source said.

"The father claimed in front of the police during preliminary questioning

that he killed his daughter because of her immoral behaviour," the source told the Jordan Times.

According to another source, the victim, who was divorced five years ago, had an argument with her father "about her alleged immoral affairs" while they were walking in an alley.

"During a heated argument in which Nabilah informed her father about a 52-year-old man, Jumah drew his unlicensed gun and shot her once in the back of the head," the source said.

The source added that Jumah then went downtown, where the man was, shot him once in the neck, and then fled the scene. The man was "slightly

injured but was reported in good condition, the source added.

Criminal Prosecutor Hassan Abdullah ordered that the suspect be detained at Swaqa Corrective and Rehabilitation Centre for 15 days pending further investigations into the case, the source said.

Jumah, who confessed to both crimes, was also charged with attempted premeditated murder and possessing an illegal weapon.

Nabilah became the 14 woman reportedly killed in a crime of honour in Jordan this year.

Last year, 25 women were reportedly killed in the Kingdom for reasons of honour.



PRINCE ALI VISITS SALT: HRH Prince Ali Monday receives a briefing on the holdings of a museum in Salt which houses manuscripts and other items of historic value dating back to different eras. Earlier, Prince Ali met with officials from both the Balqa governorate and the Salt municipality and inspected several institutions (Petra photo)

Government asks Brazil to investigate Jordanian's death

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government has asked Brazil to investigate the recent killing of a 35-year-old Jordanian in São Paulo by three unidentified assailants, officials said Monday.

Wahid Abdul Raouf Shiyab was gunned down at around 2:00 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 20, near the company he worked for in Brazil, according to official sources.

"We have delegated Jordanian diplomats in Brazil to follow up on the case and the motives behind the killing and to take care of Shiyab's family there," an official source told the Jordan Times Monday.

The source added that motives behind the killing of Shiyab, who had lived in the South American country for the past two years, were still being investigated by the Brazilian authorities.

"Preliminary investigations points to an attempted robbery against Shiyab, but still the motives behind the shooting are still unclear," the official stated.

According to Al Majd weekly, an Islamic committee based in Brazil accused Israel of being behind Shiyab's murder.

The newspaper said Shiyab, who was president of Muslim League in Latin America, was assassinated by Israeli agents because he was thought to be associated with the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas.

His brother Mohammad Shiyab told the Jordan Times that "Wahid had no enemies, he was a faithful Muslim."

"We were shocked to learn about his death because things were normal. We always spoke over the phone and he never mentioned that he was subjected to any harassment by anyone," the brother said.

He said that his brother's body is expected to arrive in the Kingdom on Wednesday.

"The government is exerting its utmost efforts in this case, but we hope that they will help speed the process of delivering his body and help his family as well," he added.

Shiyab is survived by 14 brothers and sisters, his four children Sundus, six, Ahmad, five, Zeinab, three and Hind, one, and his wife Ibtisam Ahmad, 28.

"We have faith in our government that they will follow every detail in the case with the Brazilian government and bring the perpetrators to justice," Mohammad Shiyab said.

Associations float date of National Conference

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan's 80,000-member professional associations have agreed to float the deadline of the much-delayed National Conference of opposition parties and civil society institutions to counter government policies, Arabic newspapers reported on Monday.

Union leaders reportedly decided not to impose any time limit for holding the National Conference and drafting the accompanying National Salvation Plan, but to immediately start preparations.

The compromise solution was reached after a three-week dispute between the associations and Jordan's 13 opposition parties, which wanted to hold the conference by September.

The National Conference was launched on June 13, but a surprise decision by the Union of Professional Associations on Aug. 2 to postpone the event for eight months provoked an uproar in the opposition's ranks.

A draft Salvation Plan made available to the Jordan Times focused on various domestic and regional issues, including halting normalisation with Israel, limiting privatisation and economic liberalisation, and strengthening ties with Syria and Iraq at the expense of the Kingdom's relations with the West.

Swimming complexes feel pinch of water crisis

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The seven-week-old water crisis appears to have hit a handful of private swimming clubs around western Amman, forcing at least one to shut down in an "expression of solidarity" with water-thirsty Jordanians.

Though many had resorted to water rationing measures long before the crisis struck, many say they are facing an uphill battle to secure supplies from tankers, often at black market rates.

"We mainly decided to close our pools until further notice for reasons of national solidarity," said Elias Habash, general manager of the Orthodox Club in Abdoun.

"People could not find drinking water and here we were offering them water to swim in," he told the Jordan Times. The club, which closed on Saturday, found it

difficult to obtain the 100 cubic metres of water required daily to run the facility.

"It was impossible to queue endlessly every day for hours at government-appointed stations providing water tankers," he added. "Some do not get their share even after waiting."

Habash said the club might re-open its pools for two days a week if the government manages to solve the water crisis, which has cut down on normally scant summer supplies.

The state-run Al Hussein Sports City, one of the oldest sports complexes in Amman, said it was scrambling to find water tankers to secure water for toilets and showers for thousands of members.

"The problem is not with our three pools as there is no need to replenish our water on a daily basis," said one official at the complex. "Our

problem is with the showers, and we encounter tremendous difficulty finding water tankers."

The government earlier this month installed monitors at 40 private water wells to crack down on profiteering. But most residents said the measures did not ease their plight as they remain at the mercy of government red tape at the wells or in the hands of several profiteers.

Most swimming pools, which have an underwater filtering system and another one for purifying overflowing surface water, have to take water samples every two hours to check concentration of chlorine.

For the Royal Automobile Club, which has operated on water management precautions for the past seven years, the water crisis has not hit the facility hard.

"We have limited the free usage of showers by having

one open shower near the pool where members shower in cold water, thus reducing water use," the club's general manager, Hasan Alaeddin, told the Jordan Times.

He said every summer the club decreases pressure on its water pump to minimise water loss.

"We have had to form policies to minimise water loss because we felt water shortages every summer."

All five- and four-star hotels said they have not shut down their swimming pools or health clubs because of water shortages. But for Amra Hotel, operating the swimming pool has an extra security advantage.

"We need the pool's water as a permanent supply for our fire alarm sprinklers, as the pool provides 150 cubic metres of water in case of a fire," said Pierre Weiss, the hotel's general manager.

Animal protection society to introduce nationwide awareness campaign in schools

By Randa Naffa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordanian Society for the Protection of Animals (JSPA) is turning to schools as part of a nationwide campaign to raise public awareness on animal abuse, blamed on ignorance, poverty and negligence.

"In a bid to increase awareness among children, the JSPA established educational programmes in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, which handled visits and lectures at the different schools around the Kingdom," said Ragheb Kamal, the society's director.

He was speaking at a one-day seminar held last week to look into ways to promote the JSPA's activities.

Nadia Hammam, supervisor of JSPA's educational programme, stressed the importance of integrating the concept of animal protection in the educational curriculum at schools to encourage children to respect animals and their role as part of natural cycle.

"Our aim will be to expand the educational programme and teach the young to be nice to animals through

innovative methods," she said.

"The JSPA is very concerned with making people take action regarding the cruelty of animals," Hammam added.

She also said decision-makers had to take measures to protect animals from abuse.

To counter wide spread perceptions, an Islamic expert cited verses from the Holy Koran that encourage people not to mistreat animals.

Senator Abdul Aziz Khayat, a former minister of Awaqaf and Islamic affairs, said animals should also be protected because they are part of nature and contribute to the balance of life on earth.

Yarmouk University Professor Mohammad Sabareeny said human beings, with their "rational ability," had to learn how to cope with animals, which cannot go beyond their biological capacity.

Meanwhile, JSPA Vice Chairperson Margaret Ledger said the society's new programme to involve animals such as horses and pets in the treatment of the handicapped had achieved some promising results.

The programme was launched in cooperation with the Jordanian Society for Therapeutic Treatment and the Society for the Protection of Animals Ahsad (SPAN), to which the JSPA is affiliated.

"The handicapped showed progress when they [interacted] with the animals," Ledger told the Jordan Times on the sidelines of the seminar. "Through the movement of the animals, the handicapped were able to build their self-esteem. And this signals the influence of animals on people."

The JSPA, a non-governmental organisation, was established in 1988 under the umbrella of the London-based SPANA in association with the Ministry of Agriculture.

JSPA, which evolved into an independent society later, is dedicated to the protection of animals by providing veterinary help at its clinics and first aid as part of field services covering the areas of Amman, Balqa, Madaba, Irbid, Ajloun, the Jordan Valley and surrounding villages.

Kamal said the JSPA offers free veterinary help to poor owners of animals in rural areas.

NHF plans children's musical on cancer

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) plans to stage a children's musical entitled "The Kind Chemo" in November to raise awareness of cancer and its treatment and to build positive attitudes toward the disease, according to an NHF press conference.

The donations and the revenues from the performances, which are scheduled to coincide with His Majesty King Hussein's birthday, will go to the Al Ilm Noor Student Relief Fund to help support the treatment of children with cancer at Al Amal Centre. Her Majesty Queen Noor is the chair of the centre, 50 per cent of whose patients are children.

"The Kind Chemo," a family musical which will be produced jointly by the NHF's National Music Conservatory and Performing Arts Centre, aims at helping families cope with cancer and highlights that cancer can be cured. It shows a child with cancer who talks about his reaction and that of his parents to the ordeal. The child then enters the hospital and meets another child who

has been treated with chemotherapy and has been cured. The second child helps the first in facing the disease. The musical also includes scenes that convey social and educational messages, the statement said.

Sima Bahous, NHF executive director, said: "The musical falls in line with the NHF's comprehensive development strategy, which employs different traditional and non-traditional methods to reach people with health, education and other development messages. In this case, the entertainment-education approach through dance, music and drama will be used as a tool to help Jordanians tackle cancer."

A Royal Court statement said Queen Noor expressed her appreciation and gratitude to those contributing to Al Ilm Noor Student Relief Fund, which was established two years ago to ensure that all students in Jordan are given the opportunity to complete their education. This year, money from the fund will also finance the treatment of children with cancer at Al Amal Centre, the statement added.

what's going on

FILMS
* "Truly Madly Deeply" at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 7:00 p.m. (Children's film "Watership Down" will also be screened on Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.).

INTERACTIVE TELEPHONE LINKUP
* Interactive Telephone Linkup to discuss "Promoting Art Institutions @ the Internet" at the American Center, Abdoun at 4:00 p.m. It features Ms. Joan Stahl, Coordinator, Image Collections, Research & Scholars Center, at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. and representatives from the Jordanian art community. (An Internet demonstration will follow the discussion).

SUMMER '98 FESTIVAL
"Summer '98" cultural activities at Darat Al Foun, Jabal Weibdeh, to last until Sept. 30, include:

EXHIBITIONS
* Graphic art from Lebanon, works by Lebanese artist Yousef Aoun and Jordanian artist Sahel Haid at the Main House.
* Works by Iraqi artist Samer Usama and Jordanian artist Said Haddadin at the Blue House.
* Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.
* Exhibition of photographs "Memory of a Place" by Jordanian artist Hussein Da'sh at the Museum.

EXHIBITIONS
* Exhibition of wrought iron furniture by Jordanian artist Salim Al Baidak at Al Baidar Hall, Kan Zaman village (Tel. 5862531), until Sept. 17.
* Summer display of products at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre/Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Saqra (Tel. 569-9141/2), until Aug. 31.
* "Minimatures in Humanities and Environment" by Walid Nasrallah at Orfali Art Gallery, Um Uttheina, until Aug. 25 (Tel. 5526932).

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MAN (J.T.) — Off- and residents of the town bordering the continued presence more than 2,000 trucks a municipality to create environmental hazards other problems for citizens.

amtha's Deputy Director Qassem Al-Murad said the trucks, which are nanently parked within city's boundaries and side streets, are not only gerous to residents but damage the environment and the town's infrastructure and continuously traffic jam.

emanding that the ks be moved outside town, Mheidat said the lic safety committee amtha helped build a king lot for the trucks side the town.

ut according to Ramik yor Abdul Aziz Thiyab, truck-owners and drs prefer to park the cks close to their homes ide the town es ough he said the parking is supplied with the city and telephone es.

Thiyab added that the municipality is continuing ching up roads along the trucks.

amtha's resident Ghaz al-Bil, director of the am's health department, local inhabitants are acerned for their children's safety in the Ramia eets.

The trucks emit gas as gasses in the atmosphere and risk des on the street, creating a permanent danger to e public, especially children, said Zuhair.

Mahmoud Zuhair, a town resident and the the Ramia branch of a Jordanian Environmental Society (JES), said the complaint, saying that the shules' emissions, among the main causes of pollution in the town.

He said that the JES' work in communication is concerned with finding a suitable solution to the problem of pollution. The JES is also plant trees along the main roads to help reduce pollution, he added.

According to Rana ahad, the JES, which transports people from Turkey and Syria to the north to the Gulf, considers the main source of income for the town's people.

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Worn-down Yeltsin hands baton to Chernomyrdin

MOSCOW (AFP) — Worn down and humiliated by Russia's economic crisis, Boris Yeltsin has grudgingly handed his presidential baton to Viktor Chernomyrdin, a stodgy Soviet-era bureaucrat who excels at mending political fences.

Analysts said Yeltsin's stunning endorsement Monday of Chernomyrdin as his heir apparent to the Kremlin throne amounted to a painful admission by the 67-year-old president that his own eventual career was near its end.

Yeltsin's eye settled on his old premier because, following a week of feverish consultations, a clique of business and political heavyweights advised the Kremlin chief that Chernomyrdin, 60, suited their tastes best, the analysts said.

The announcement culminates months of behind-the-scenes battles by Kremlin insiders who each had money on their own political horse in the 2000 presidential elections — be it youthful Boris Nemtsov, feisty Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, or charismatic General Alexander Lebed.

All, however, were first waiting for Yeltsin to decide whether he was up for the challenge of another term. After a five-month financial storm that resulted in a humiliating decision to effectively devalue the ruble, the president has decided he has had enough, analysts said.

"To Yeltsin, this endorsement was forced and unpleasant. It shows that he is in a bad political and psychological state. He is very confused," said Alexei Venediktov, the news editor of Moscow Echo radio who has close ties with much of Russia's political and business elite.

Chernomyrdin's return to political favour — Yeltsin asked him to replace deposed premier Sergei Kiriyenko Sunday — comes five months to the day after Yeltsin unceremoniously dumped him as prime minister.

"All of this is pretty funny if it wasn't so sad," said Yevgeny Volk of the Heritage Foundation. "Yeltsin has run out of options. He is taking a complete step away from economics and the social sphere," Volk said.

Many analysts said the last straw for Yeltsin was last week's decision to effectively devalue the ruble and default on Russia's debt. A stable currency had been the

Kremlin's proudest economic achievement of post-Soviet reform.

"By firing Kiriyenko, Yeltsin has admitted to making mistakes. Yeltsin would have never done that before. Now Chernomyrdin comes riding into the government on a white horse," said Sergei Markov of the Institute of Political Studies.

"But this decision inexorably reduces Yeltsin's own power and elevates the influence of oligarchs in the Kremlin," Markov added.

Yeltsin fought fiercely against parliamentary opposition last April to ram the technocrat Kiriyenko through for approval. Lawmakers have since scuttled most of the legislation the government proposed to combat the mounting economic crisis.

But sensing that Yeltsin's resolve to back Kiriyenko was waning, Kremlin insiders held a series of meetings last week to quickly come up with a back-up plan, analysts said.

"The top oligarchs and senior governors like (Alexander) Lebed discussed all the possible candidates and Chernomyrdin was agreed on almost unanimously," Venediktov said. "Of course, (arch reformer Anatoly) Chubais was against it, but he was out-

'No Russian cabinet until Duma confirms PM'

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's acting Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said Monday he would only announce his new government after the State Duma lower house of parliament had confirmed him in his post, Interfax news agency said.

"When I become premier then I will announce (the cabinet line-up)," Interfax quoted him as saying. Earlier, Duma speaker Gennady Seleznyov had said the Communist-dominated chamber wanted Chernomyrdin to present his programme and the line-up of the government before it would consider his candidacy.

President Boris Yeltsin asked the veteran Chernomyrdin to form a new government Sunday after sacking the four-month old cabinet of Sergei Kiriyenko, citing the need for stability.

In a televised address Monday, Yeltsin urged the Duma to approve Chernomyrdin quickly as prime minister. But opposition parties, including the Communists, are hoping to win concessions including posts in any new cabinet.

Parliamentary chiefs have already said they have no plans to debate Chernomyrdin's nomination this week.

Under the constitution, they have until late next Monday to approve or reject Chernomyrdin, although Yeltsin can choose to withdraw Chernomyrdin's candidacy and resubmit it later to give deputies more time.

Duma speaker Seleznyov said that he had agreed with Yeltsin in a telephone conversation to allow an extra few days. "I said one week might not be enough for consultations and asked the president to be prepared to resubmit his letter. The president said he is ready to do that if it is requested," Seleznyov said.

If the Duma rejects Yeltsin's candidate or candidates for prime minister three times in a row, the president automatically dissolves the chamber and calls a fresh parliamentary election.

publicly-known incidents in recent years.

Troops violently quashed a protest by Muslims at the poor Tanjung Priok port area in northern Jakarta in 1984. The military at the time said that 30 people were killed, while witnesses and other sources spoke of around 200 dead.

Aceh and Irian Jaya are two regions where the Indonesian military have engaged in anti-separatist operations and where human rights watchdogs have accused it of widespread killings and violations of human rights.

In 1989, troops clashed with members of an obscure Muslim sect in Lampung, southern Sumatra, leaving 41 dead according to officials. Unofficial tallies put the dead at over 100.

"These other (military) operations will have to be investigated, and it is the responsibility of the military leadership to explain what had really happened," Said said.

At least 24 activists had been missing since early this year and nine who have resurfaced told stories of forced abduction and torture as well as solitary detention. One was found dead.

"I think a lot of people will be unhappy with the decision, because people now want to

voted."

A Soviet-era energy minister, Chernomyrdin's chief political assets are his friendly relations with Communists in parliament and — avoiding decisive action — his ability to build allies out of mortal enemies.

Such a stance has however alienated him from staunch market economists like Chubais and Boris Nemtsov, who announced Monday he would not serve in Chernomyrdin's government.

Some analysts further warn that with Russia's economy in such despair, an endorsement from Yeltsin amounts to little more than the kiss of death. "Chernomyrdin understands this and will distance himself as much as possible from Yeltsin," said Volk.

While analysts were split on whether the interim premier will manage to pull Russia from its troubles in time and thus boost his chances of securing the Kremlin in 2000, they agree that by designating Chernomyrdin as his successor, Yeltsin had taken his final bow from Russian politics.

"Yeltsin has realised that the extent of his power has limits," Volk said.



Former anti-apartheid cleric Dr. Allan Boesak, accompanied by his wife Elna (centre) and daughter Bulani (right), arrives at court to answer charges of theft and misappropriation. The charges relate to funds allocated to the Foundation for Peace and Justice, which Boesak headed during the struggle against apartheid (Reuters photo)

Anti-apartheid leader Boesak pleads innocent in fraud trial

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — Allan Boesak, once a prominent figure in the struggle against white rule, pleaded innocent Monday to charges he stole money intended for the anti-apartheid cause.

At the start of a trial expected to last at least three months, Boesak sat impassively in the dock as state prosecutor J. C. Gerber read out 32 charges of fraud and theft totalling nearly 1.1 million rand — worth nearly \$300,000 at the time.

His lawyer, Mike Maritz, entered Boesak's innocent plea.

Boesak, a former minister who once headed the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, is accused of stealing cash from the Foundation for Peace and Justice, which he operated from 1988 to 1994.

Donations came from singer Paul Simon, the Coca-Cola Foundation,

Scandinavian aid agencies and others. Freddie Steenkamp, Boesak's bookkeeper at the foundation, was sentenced last year to six years in jail after pleading guilty to embezzling cash. During his trial Steenkamp testified he was only following Boesak's example.

Boesak has paid back some of the missing money. Once a top African National Congress official in the Cape Town area, Boesak played a prominent role in the anti-apartheid struggle that ended in the country's first all-race elections in 1994.

He gave up an appointment as ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva when the scandal involving his charity emerged, and left South Africa to lecture in the United States for a year.

When he returned to South Africa last year, he was greeted at the airport by Justice Minister Dullah

Omar and a crowd of cheering supporters. The incident provoked uproar among opposition politicians who accused the ANC of covering up for Boesak.

An ANC investigation cleared him of wrongdoing, but Scandinavian donors criticised the probe and prosecutors later filed charges.

Speaking to reporters on the steps of Cape Town's High Court, Boesak said he was relieved the case had started after long delays over funding for his defence.

"It has been a long, dark haul. Now the case has finally started I am very happy," he said, wearing a dark blue suit and surrounded by cheering supporters.

The prosecution's first witness, Dawn King, a forensic accountant, led off an explanation of the church alliance's accounts that is expected to dominate court proceedings for the next three weeks.

Bhutto, husband appear in court to answer corruption charges

LAHORE, Pakistan (AFP)

Former Pakistani Premier Benazir Bhutto appeared in court again Monday with her husband on corruption charges and urged it to unfreeze her accounts so she can arrange her defence, court sources said.

Bhutto appeared before a two-judge bench of the Lahore High Court along with her detained husband Asif Ali Zardari to answer the charges in cases filed by the government.

The judges, Ehsanul Haq Chaudhry and Faqir Muhammad Khokar, agreed to consider Wednesday the request for the lifting of a freeze on her

assets which was ordered in April.

They adjourned until Sept. 9 the hearing of charges involving allegations that the couple received kickbacks and commissions on government contracts during Bhutto's rule.

Bhutto had requested an adjournment until October, saying she had heavy commitments as opposition leader. The court asked her to make an application when she needed to travel abroad on dates which clash with hearings.

Bhutto, who was sacked as premier in November 1996 on charges of corruption and misuse, has consistently denied any wrongdoing and accused Pakistani authorities of trying to frame her and her family. She has also hit back at a Swiss magistrate who has demanded she be indicted on money-laundering charges, saying he had acted against the Swiss constitution and law.

The Lahore court last month allowed Zardari partial use of his assets and accounts. Zardari has been in jail since Bhutto was sacked. He has been charged with involvement in a conspiracy to murder Bhutto's brother Mir Murtaza, who died in Karachi in September 1996 in a police shootout.

Final appeal filed in Spanish hit squad convictions

MADRID (AFP) — The former coordinator of the fight against terrorism in Spain's Basque region filed an appeal Monday against his conviction over the 1983-1988 "Dirty War" against Basque separatists.

Francisco Alvarez was the last to appeal among the 12 men sentenced last month for involvement in death squads which hunted down armed Basque separatists.

Alvarez was sentenced to nine and a half years for his role in the affair. Former Socialist Interior Minister Jose Barrionuevo and his

one-time deputy, Rafael Vera, were given 10 years.

Former Socialist Premier Felipe Gonzalez acted as lawyer in Barrionuevo and Vera in filing their appeals last week. The two were the only men among the 12 defendants to deny the charges.

Gonzalez was absolved by a court in November 1996 of any responsibility in the death squads, which were blamed for the murders of 28 members of the Basque ETA militant movement.

Despite the appeals, the 12 are expected to be taken into custody as scheduled in September.

Six of the defendants, including Barrionuevo and Vera, were found guilty of illegal detention and embezzlement of public funds in the 1983 kidnapping of Spanish-born French businessman Segundo Marey, in the first action claimed by the GAL death squads.

Five others, all but one of them ex-police officers, were found guilty of illegal detention, while a twelfth, also an ex-police officer, was found guilty of complicity in the detention.

The sentences ranged from two years and four months to 10 years in prison.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Japan studies successor to home-grown rocket next year

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's trade ministry will begin studies next year for a successor to the home-grown H-2A rocket launcher now under development, aiming for a cheaper product, an official said Monday. "We plan to request an allocation of 30 million yen (\$207,000) under the state budget for fiscal 1999 (starting in April) for a study group of space industry people and academics," a ministry official said. "The group will discuss a rough outline of the successor," including launching methods and costs, he said. Japan suffered a major blow to its ambitious space programme in February when the launch of a \$36-million communications test satellite failed when it was released too early from an H-2 rocket. It was the country's first failed launch from the southern island of Tanegashima after five successful blast-offs since 1994. The H-2 is the first fully-Japanese built rocket. It is a two-stage, liquid-fuel propulsion rocket and a rival to the European Ariane-4. The nation is already developing the H-2A rocket, a high-performance but cheaper version of the H-2, for an expected launch in 2000. It aims to slash the launch costs to below \$5 billion yen, less than half the cost for the preceding H-2. The launch cost for the H-2A's successor could be "far less" than \$5 billion yen, the trade ministry official quoted space industry sources as saying.

Farmers meet emu running with their cattle

GREAT FALLS, Montana (AP) — Home, home on the range, where the deer and the emu play. Emu? Edward Hastings and his sister were repairing a water tank last week when their cattle plodded into the field with an odd escort — an emu. The 1.5 metre, 45 kilogramme flightless Australian bird ran to them for water. "It was pretty strange seeing this emu running with our cows," said Hastings's sister, Roberta Schuchard. "He was crazy that day." Since then the emu has spent its time peacefully eating grass and roaming between Hastings' pasture and a neighbour. Hastings checks in on the bird daily while harvesting. Ms. Schuchard said she doesn't know of anyone in the area who owns emus or similar-looking ostriches. She called the sheriff's office Friday in hopes of finding the owner. "It wasn't a nuisance or anything. The cows aren't too upset about it," she said. "But if it were my animal, I'd want somebody to turn it in." Ted Furryak, a county animal control officer, planned to capture the emu Monday and take it to a local ostrich farm until someone claims it. "It's not going anywhere right now," he said. "It just wanders right up to you, but whether it'll do that when we grab it will be another story," he said.

Pilot rescued after U.S. fighter jet crashes off S. Korea

SEOUL (AFP) — A U.S. Air Force pilot was rescued by a fishing boat after his F-16 fighter jet crashed Monday off the coast of South Korea, the defence ministry said. The 31-year-old pilot, who was alone in the jet, was said to be uninjured following the crash into the sea off the eastern seaboard port of Anin, the official said. The accident occurred at 6:10 p.m. (0910 GMT) about one kilometre off the coast near the town of Kangnung. The pilot was hauled from the water by a South Korean fishing boat operating in the area and taken to the nearby 18th Fighter Group of the South Korean Air Force, Yonhap news agency said. The aircraft was on a routine mission which was not connected with joint U.S.-South Korean war games currently underway here, the defence ministry said. The U.S. forces in Seoul were not immediately available for comment on the accident. Around 37,000 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea to defend against possible attacks by Communist North Korea. About 13,000 U.S. troops and an unspecified number of Seoul troops are holding a 13-day joint exercise codenamed "Ulchi Focus Lens." North Korea's propaganda machine has been railing against the operation calling it an act of aggression.

Police find marijuana growing next door

WINSTED, Connecticut (AP) — That's why they call it dope. Two people were arrested Friday for allegedly growing marijuana on their back porch, less than 90 metres from police headquarters — in plain sight of the patrol car parking lot. An anonymous tip alerted cops. "The voice at the other end of the line just said, 'Go outside to your parking lot and look at the building next door,'" Sgt. Paul Campi said Saturday. "So that's what I did, and I couldn't believe what I saw." Police seized three, 1-metre plants and almost 28 grammes of packaged marijuana, along with smoking paraphernalia. Deborah J. Bouchez, 44, and Jason J. Heacock, 19, were charged with cultivating marijuana and possession.

Myanmar passenger plane missing with 39 people on board

BANGKOK (AFP) — An Air Myanmar passenger plane carrying 39 people disappeared Monday after taking off from Yangon, prompting a joint search by Thai and Myanmar aviation authorities, Thai officials said. The Fokker F-27 turboprop plane left Yangon early Monday but never arrived at the town of Tachileik in the remote eastern Shan state near the border with Thailand, a source in the Thai defence ministry told AFP. The source said Myanmar authorities contacted their counterparts to help in an air search for the missing plane, which was believed to involve at least one Thai helicopter. Foreign diplomatic sources in Myanmar said poor weather in Tachileik meant the plane had been unable to land and was ordered instead to land in the Myanmar town of He Ho or the Thai city of Chiang Mai. Officials at both airports had been notified but no more had been heard from the plane. The area where the plane went missing is rugged and sparsely populated. It also forms part of the Golden Triangle opium-growing region. Government officials in Myanmar confirmed the plane was missing and said they were waiting for reports. No further details were immediately available. The flight was understood to be a regular domestic service leaving Yangon about 8.30 a.m. (0200 GMT) and due to take about two hours to reach Tachileik.

Missing cat lost one life in tornado

GREENFIELD, Indiana (AP) — For Sam, it's one down, eight lives to go. After a tornado ripped through Paul and Chris Staten's home in June, the couple frantically searched through the debris for Sam, their declared house cat. In vain. Fearfully, the Statens had to give him up for dead. But last week, nine weeks after Sam vanished, the couple received a phone call from a friend who said the cat had appeared at a neighbour's home four days after the storm with severe injuries. Sam had apparently been sucked into the sky by the June 11 twister, then dropped to earth about 6 kilometres away — across Interstate 70. "The cat was found in the path of the tornado and what I think happened is that it literally just dropped her off at this spot," Chris Staten said Saturday. Sam, with one life gone, is now back with the happy Statens in their home near Indianapolis. "It kind of completes the family and gets everything back to the way it was and now we can now kind of go and rebuild from here," Staten said.

World
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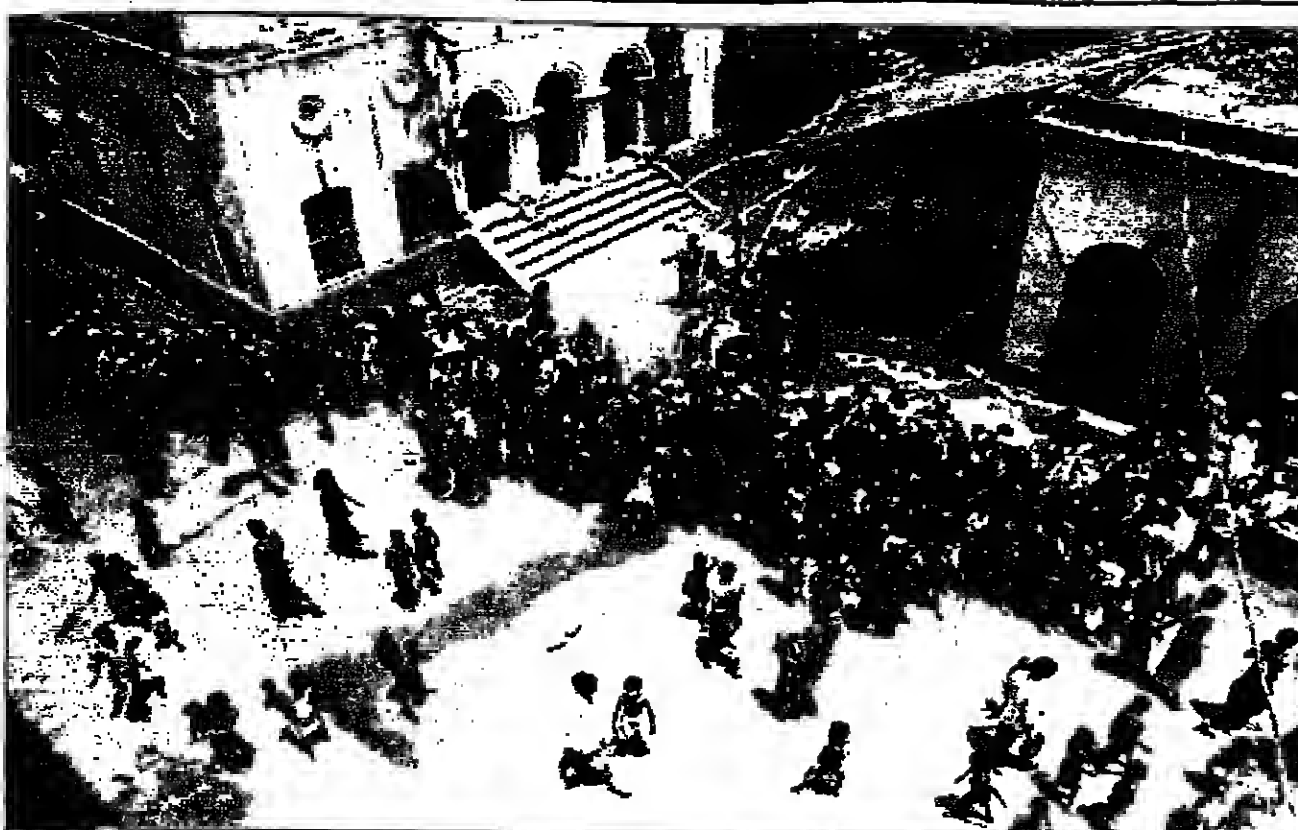
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World News



Flood victims gather at a school, one of the few dry places at the Narayanj River port near Dhaka, as they wait for relief goods. The floods, which have killed more than 370 people, inundated much of the town, which is a major business centre in the country (Reuters photo)

Ganges River claims three lives in Bangladesh floods, death toll nears 400

DHAKA (AFP) — Rising water levels on the Ganges River have claimed three more lives and pushed the death toll in six weeks of relentless floods in Bangladesh to 395, officials and press reports said Monday.

The latest deaths were reported from western district of Rajshahi, where an embankment was under threat from the raging Ganges, a health control official said.

The army was posted to clear a huge traffic jam on a key highway linking Dhaka with the southeastern port city of Chittagong and northeastern tea-growing district of Sylhet after roads were submerged by floodwaters.

A photographer said up to 8,000 heavy trucks were stranded on the highway. Officials at the Flood Forecasting Centre (FFC) have blamed an exceptionally high tide in the Bay of Bengal and an "alarming" rise in the Ganges River for the worsening flood situation.

New areas were submerged Monday in and around Dhaka.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed Monday identified clogged rivers as the major cause for massive floodings.

"Through massive dredging (of waterways) we could save the people from recurring floods as well as create new lands through

reclamation," she was quoted as saying by the official BSS news agency during a meeting with a ruling Awami League affiliated union.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad Sunday said Bangladesh would welcome any help in the face of its worst floods in a decade which have cost at least \$22.5 million in damages including \$146.4 million to agriculture alone.

"We welcome any form of assistance, including rehabilitation, infrastructure development and dredging of rivers, from any government, international agencies, and development partners," he told Dhaka-based ambassadors

during a briefing. Sheikh Hasina said Bangladesh would have evolved a proper water management system to avoid floods and save water during the monsoon season for the winter dry period.

BSS said Narayanganj, Madaripur, Munshiganj, Manikganj and Narsinghdi districts, mostly in central Bangladesh, have been submerged under knee-deep water.

However, there were signs of improvement in eight districts and another eight remained static, BSS said.

Up to 30 million people have been made homeless by floods over the past weeks, the longest recorded period of flooding.

Myanmar passenger plane missing with 39 people

BANGKOK (AFP) — An Air Myanmar passenger plane carrying 39 people disappeared Monday after taking off from Yangon, prompting a joint search by Thai and Myanmar aviation authorities. Thai officials said.

The Fokker F-27 turbo-prop plane left Yangon early Monday but never arrived at the town of Tachilek in the remote eastern Shan state near the border with Thailand, a source in the Thai defence ministry told AFP.

The source said Myanmar authorities contacted their Thai counterparts to help in an air search for the missing plane, which was believed to involve at least one Thai helicopter. Foreign diplomatic sources in Myanmar said poor weather in Tachilek meant the plane had been unable to land and was ordered instead to land in the Myanmar town of He Ho or the Thai city of Chiang Mai.

Officials at both airports had been notified but no more had been heard from the plane. The area where the plane went missing is rugged and sparsely populated. It also forms part of the Golden Triangle opium-growing region. Government officials in Myanmar confirmed the plane was missing and said they were waiting for reports.

No further details were immediately available. The flight was understood to be a regular domestic service leaving Yangon about 8.30 a.m. (0200 GMT) and due to take about two hours to reach Tachilek.

U.N. pulls all foreign aid staff out of Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (R) — All foreigners working for the United Nations in Afghanistan have left the country for security reasons, a U.N. spokesperson said Monday.

"All the United Nations programmes in Afghanistan are being carried out by the Afghan staff ... like health care, refugee assistance and de-mining," Sarah Russell told Reuters.

She said the foreign staff had been taken out of Afghanistan but local Afghan staff was carrying out the work as usual.

About 36 expatriates working for the United Nations were evacuated from Afghanistan for security reasons after the United States carried out missile attacks in Khosht in eastern Afghanistan Thursday, killing at least 21 people and wounded 53.

The U.N. and dozens of aid agencies working in Afghanistan feared retaliations by militants following the U.S. strikes.

Friday an Italian army officer working for the U.N. was shot dead and another French col-

league was wounded by gunmen in Kabul in apparent retaliation against the strikes.

After the shootings in Kabul most of the relief agencies pulled out their expatriate staff.

Exact numbers were unknown, but a U.S. embassy spokesman in Islamabad said to his knowledge all the American nationals, around 20, were accounted for. A British embassy official said about 20 of its nationals, along with Irish and New Zealand aid workers, had also returned from Afghanistan.

Anti-Western protesters stormed and damaged a U.N. office in Jalalabad, and another non-government organisation's compound in the ancient southeast city of Herat was attacked and partially destroyed.

Precautions were taken against anti-Western sentiment turning violent in Pakistan, close to the Afghan border, where aid workers were told to stay home.

Abdul Rahman, a national project professional working for the Food and Agriculture

Organisation (FAO) in the Pakistani border town of Peshawar, said FAO workers had been told not to come to work and to hide their U.N. vehicles.

He said the same instructions had been given to staff in Kabul.

Most of the FAO's expatriate staff was on leave as harvests were already completed, and they had been told not to return until further notice, Rahman said.

U.N. sources in Islamabad said all offices of the United Nations were closed Monday for security reasons and only local staff would return to work Tuesday. No other details were immediately available.

Foreign journalists visiting Peshawar, a city on the Pakistan side of the Khyber Pass in North West Frontier Province, were advised by locals to stay in their hotels and not to travel unaccompanied as the U.S. air strikes had inflamed anti-Western sentiment. They were also told to stay away from Afghan refugee camps.

Congo minister blasts underhand S. Africa

PRETORIA (AFP) — A Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) minister Monday blasted South Africa for alleged underhand manoeuvres a day after President Nelson Mandela led regional powers in an urgent appeal for a ceasefire in the DRC.

Justice Minister Mwenze Kongo also said President Laurent Kabila's DRC would only engage in peace talks after troops from Rwanda and Uganda withdrew from the country, a statement he also made on Radio France Internationale.

He told reporters in Pretoria that troops from Angola and Zimbabwe, who were supporting the DRC government, would not be required to leave. "We are a legitimate government, we have the right to have any troops we want," said Kongo. While Zimbabwe

and Angola have sent soldiers to back the Kinshasa regime, the latter accuses Rwanda and Uganda of "aggression" in support of the rebels.

Speaking in an interview broadcast Monday by RFL, Kabila's envoy said: "What the (DRC) Congo understands by a ceasefire is the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops, in the event those of Rwanda and Uganda."

"That is our understanding of a ceasefire."

Kongo, who participated in Sunday's regional summit, alleged that the South Africans were engaged in "behind-the-scenes manoeuvres not likely to bring peace".

The outburst struck a discordant note a day after the Southern African Development Community (SADC) unanimously backed a resolution supporting the DRC government and calling

for an immediate ceasefire in the DRC and a troop standstill. Kongo said a signal from a South African Airways (SAA) aircraft had been intercepted in a rebel-held area of eastern DRC Sunday night.

"We learnt yesterday (Sunday) evening from different reliable sources that a South African aeroplane from SAA was intercepted by our radios, asking for permission to land in Goma at around 6:00 p.m. yesterday," Kongo told a press conference in Pretoria.

"We informed the South African government and we are still waiting for their explanation."

"Congo believes that such behind-the-scenes manoeuvres are not likely to bring peace in this country," Kongo said.

Foreign Affairs spokesman Machiel van Niekirk said: "As far as we know, there is no such plane in Goma."

Serbs pound central Kosovo, say KLA regrouping

PRISTINA, Serbia (R) — Serb artillery pounded areas near Kosovo's airport Monday, sending civilians fleeing amid signs separatist rebels scattered by a recent offensive were regrouping.

Civilians fled the villages of Magura and Lelcic, about 12 km southwest of the provincial capital Pristina, as Serbs bombarded mountainous areas nearby, witnesses said.

Both villages were in flames and civilians could be seen escaping onto the main road.

The fighting took place on the southeast flank of Golec Mountain, which local Serb sources say is the site of an important Serb military installation and is topped by two communications masts.

It was the second day in a row that Serb forces used their firepower, including artillery and heavy machineguns, in the area near the airport and west and southwest of Pristina.

Serb sources in Pristina said bands of separatist Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) guerrillas broken up

in fighting around Komorane, west of Pristina, were regrouping.

"It is probably an attempt to regain control of communications in order to be taken seriously for future (peace) negotiations," said a source who demanded anonymity.

The ethnic Albanian daily Bujku quoted Dzafer Satri, minister of information for a government-in-exile in Geneva, as saying that four days ago the KLA had formed a headquarters for western Kosovo.

The headquarters covered 58 villages in the region and its command structure was run by professional soldiers, the report said.

The KLA, which began an open rebellion in February for independence for Kosovo and its ethnic Albanian majority, was pushed back in a massive, month-long Serb offensive that began in July.

But despite Serb police and army troops retaking almost all towns and villages that had fallen to the KLA, fighting has continued, with casualties mounting on both sides.

Late Sunday night, the bodies of 10 ethnic Albanians believed to have been killed along the Albanian-Montenegro border were taken to the morgue in Djakovica, west of Pristina, the ethnic Albanians' Kosovo Information Centre said.

It said only one of the bodies, that of Adem Dervisi, 62, of the village of Batusa, had so far been identified. The KIC, whose report could not be independently verified, gave no further details.

Serb sources released the identity of a policeman killed Sunday near Komorane, saying that Goran Andric, 33, of Belgrade was killed and five other policemen were wounded when police and army troops came under fire.

Yugoslav Army Pristina Corps spokesman Zeljko Zirojevic said late Sunday that armed groups of Kosovo Albanians had so far caused a total of 146 armed incidents and that border guards had "liquidated more than 450 terrorists", which is the Serb

authorities' term for KLA rebels.

He said the army had seized more than 900 rifles, 200 machineguns, 20 recoilless cannon, 70 rocket-propelled grenade launchers and mortars, over 700 rounds of RPG and mortar ammunition and more than 450,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition. He gave no timeframe.

Western powers have called upon Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, the country's dominant politician, to end the offensive against the KLA but so far, despite huge gains against the rebels, Serb forces have kept up their attacks.

Ethnic Albanian political leader Ibrahim Rugova, who advocates passive resistance to Serb rule, has named a five-man negotiating team for talks that Rugova suspended in June because of the Serb military buildup. No dates for meetings with a Serb delegation have been set and Western envoys pushing for the talks have said it will be a long and slow process.

Aung San Suu Kyi ends stand-off with junta after 13 days

YANGON (AFP) — Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi Monday ended her 13-day roadside stand-off with the junta and returned to Yangon amid concerns for her health.

Her National League for Democracy (NLD) said she had earlier refused to turn back after being prevented, for the fourth time in recent weeks, from driving to meet provincial supporters.

Some diplomats said she was believed to have returned to her Yangon compound in an ambulance, while others said she came home in a private car with an ambulance close behind.

"From what we understand she's in reasonable condition but we don't know any more details at this stage," one diplomatic source said.

A Western envoy added that if her condition had

been serious, the Nobel peace laureate would have been taken to a hospital rather than home.

A similar stand-off last month ended when she was forcibly returned to Yangon after supporters expressed concern about her health.

NLD sources said they did not know why she had ended her latest protest but she had this time returned to Yangon voluntarily and might have been responding to her family's fears for her health.

The NLD leader had been camped out on a bridge in a minibus 25 kilometres northwest of Yangon since being stopped.

The NLD earlier said Aung San Suu Kyi was committed to staying at the site until all NLD members detained or made subject to travel restrictions in recent months were released.

Yangon's military government released a statement welcoming Aung San

Suu Kyi's return, saying she was accompanied by two personal physicians who had been allowed to treat her earlier in the day.

"Ms. Suu Kyi had been complaining of constipation and dehydration, common ailments that are easily treatable," the statement said, adding that the government had supplied her with food and water during her silent protest.

The junta also said it had earlier Monday held "frank and cordial" meetings with NLD central committee members Than Tun and Soe Myint. A similar meeting, which was the first this year, was held last week.

"The government hopes that the NLD appreciates the beginning of the period of a reconciliation and understanding and to continue its cooperation and mutual help in building a better future for the people of Myanmar," the statement said.

The NLD said the pair met Home Affairs Minister Colonel Tin Hlaing on behalf of NLD chairman Aung Shwe. "Each side clarified their own position," the NLD said in a statement, without explaining why Aung Shwe did not attend the meeting.

The meeting took place as up to 150 people staged a sit-down protest at an intersection in Yangon before riot police dispersed them. They were demonstrating in support of the pro-democracy movement and its move to convene parliament, witnesses said. Several dozen were reportedly arrested.

The junta has said the NLD's decision last Friday to convene the parliament which was elected in 1990 but never allowed to sit would be illegal.

The NLD-led opposition won the 1990 polls by a landslide but the junta has refused to relinquish power.

Cambodia election protest continues with vigil at parliament

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Thousands of chanting and cheering Cambodian opposition supporters launched a sitdown vigil outside parliament Monday to protest last month's elections.

Heavily-armed police cordoned off streets around the National Assembly building near the Royal Palace in downtown Phnom Penh as the protesters began to set up a tent city.

Police took no steps to move the protesters, who had formed their own barricades behind the police cordons. Many carried banners and signs denouncing the July 26 polls and strongman Hun Sen.

It was believed to be the first-ever sitdown protest in Cambodia. Members of the public approached the tents and gave small donations for food, water and sleeping mats. Many of the donations were less than \$1 — the average wage for a civil servant in Cambodia is only \$12-18 a month.

Leading opposition politician Sam Rainsy said he would join some 500 protesters,

most of them wearing yellow ribbons symbolising democracy, in spending a first night in the park.

Ten members of the outgoing parliament had indicated they would stay overnight but the possibility of rain was expected to dampen their enthusiasm.

The vigil started with more than 1,500 people turning up, but after speeches by Sam Rainsy and officials from the royalist FUNCINPEC party of deposed co-Premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the numbers dwindled.

Sam Rainsy said several hundred volunteers would remain outside parliament, eating and sleeping there "24 hours a day as long as our complaints are not addressed properly."

The crowd was mainly peaceful but at one point they tried to attack a westerner who was passing out leaflets critical of Prince Ranariddh. Party officials held the would-be attackers off and police later removed the unidentified man.

"We have suffered for

20 years and got nothing," senior FUNCINPEC official Lu Laysreng told the crowd. "Now we have to sacrifice in order to get what we want."

Earlier, Sam Rainsy exhorted a crowd of between 3,000 and 5,000 at the capital's Olympic Stadium to go to parliament and remain there indefinitely.

The crowd at the stadium was about 4,000 less than the number that attended a similar rally Sunday, defying threats and fears of violence spurred by a grenade attack last week that killed one person.

The success of Sunday's rally had led Sam Rainsy's self-named party and FUNCINPEC to cancel Monday's planned demonstration and protest march.

"Not everyone got word of the cancellation," one senior Sam Rainsy Party official said of the crowd gathered at the stadium Monday. "But it shows that people are definitely angry at the election process."

In a joint statement released late Sunday,

the two parties said they were calling off mass demonstrations for one week to give election authorities time to address their complaints.

Final official election returns are expected to be released Saturday.

Preliminary official returns show Second Prime Minister Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party (CPP) winning the largest number of seats in parliament but not enough to form a government on its own.

The opposition, which stands to take the rest of the seats, has refused a coalition with the CPP and vowed to boycott parliament unless its fraud complaints are resolved.

The National Election Committee rejected all of the opposition's complaints and the Constitutional Council, Cambodia's highest appeals body, has refused to reconsider most of them.

A boycott would lead to a constitutional crisis with the assembly unable to meet and no government formed after the current parliament's mandate expires on Sept. 24.

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Waiting for prosecutor decision

THE DECISION of the new government to send the file on the water debacle to the prosecutor general for further judicial follow-up may suggest that there is already a prima facie case of criminal negligence. Ordinary cases of negligence are never submitted to the prosecutor general for investigation and prosecution. On the other hand, one need not read too much into the move. The public attorney may still find no justification for criminal prosecution of any official who may have been implicated in the crisis. Besides prosecution of ministers, for example, requires an indictment from a two-thirds majority of the Lower House. Obviously one is not there yet.

Furthermore, it could be difficult to prove criminal intent in the water crisis. It is simply far-fetched that an official of whatever stature or rank would deliberately disrupt the safe and free flow of water to the people. At worst, there could have been only negligence of non-criminal nature. This does not mean that non-criminal negligence may escape accountability. Once the prosecutor determines that there is no case of criminal negligence, as we suspect he will, the government must redirect its attention to make all officials who may be implicated in the problem accountable for their negligence.

Water is so essential and basic to life that its free and safe flow imposes a higher degree of responsibility on all concerned. However, only when the degree of wrong-doing in such a situation borders on wanton and gross negligence, could there be room for criminal accountability even though there is no criminal intent.

What could be even more relevant is the distribution of the governmental report on the water situation. It was expected the report would be made public a long time ago so the public could assess the problem. With all the talk in favour of transparency, we thought it was an appropriate time to put this new guideline to the test. Once the prosecution decides whether to prosecute or not, we hope that the investigation committee report will be released to the press as had been originally intended.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Rai's Tareq Masarweh argued that Arab silence on U.S. missile bombings in Sudan and Afghanistan paves the road for further unjustified "anti-terrorism" measures by the U.S. and Israel. He called on the Arab World to face up to such organised terrorism "launched by the U.S., practised by Israel and supported by Europe." Masarweh said unless there is significant criticism now, in the future it may not be possible to stop governments, such as that of Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu, from launching unjustified attacks against any part of the Arab World under the banner of an anti-terrorism campaign. Retaliation on Lebanon for supposed Hizbollah attacks would be an obvious such move, Masarweh said. The writer asked where the relationship is between such widely condemned terrorist bombings as in Nairobi and Dar Es Salam, fundamentalist offences in Luxor, etc., and the bombing of a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan? Apart from the fact that some of the fiercest terrorist organisations operating today, such as the Taleban, until recently enjoyed U.S. support and funding, Masarweh argued, a distinction needs to be made between such groups and countries, such as Libya, Sudan and Iraq, with whom the U.S. is waging a private war, serving nothing but American self-interests.

Al Dustour's Jihad Momani commented on the changing of the government, saying any new government would be welcomed since it is the departure of Majali's government which Jordanians have been waiting for. Momani lauded the abilities of new Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, calling him "an enthusiast from the south, who will not act in a rash manner, but will look in depth into all problems Jordan is facing." Momani commented on the youth of Tarawneh, who if he handles his part well could still have a long political future in the Kingdom. The transparency called for by His Majesty King Hussein, will be a prime objective for the new government, the writer said. Momani said the press will support any step towards openness and not use it to lash out at the government. The writer urged Tarawneh to combat the corruption created under previous governments. He said Jordan needs a cabinet that is willing to act for the long-term benefit of the country. Continuous governments in the past have not worked to solve problems, instead they passed on responsibility from one government to another, said Momani.

View from the Fourth Circle

Terror, the United States, and the Middle East — once again

Rami G. Khouri

NEW YORK — The United States and the largely Arab-Islamic Middle East have been brought together again this week in a blaze of military violence, harsh rhetoric, and contorted emotions. The U.S. bombing of Afghanistan and Sudan is the central act in a drama that once again threatens to launch a long-term confrontation between America and "Islamic terrorists" or "fundamentalist Islam," as they are usually called here. From the always amazing and enjoyable perspective of New York and the north-east American hinterland, the context of what is going on seems to me as fascinating as the particularities of the day-to-day events.

This has been, even for contemporary America, a dramatic week, combining in one super-spectacle four seemingly different events — President Clinton's testimony before a grand jury and his televised admission of an inappropriate (sexual) relationship with Monica Lewinsky, the American missile strikes against targets in Afghanistan and Sudan following the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Africa, the attorney-general's revived assessment of whether Vice President Al Gore's solicitation of political contributions from within the White House was illegal, and — the event that will certainly prove to be the most historically durable — Mark McGwire's relentless drive to break the record of 61 home runs in a single baseball season (the added dramatic touch Saturday being the news that he takes a legal but controversial muscle-building drug).

What is most fascinating about these four issues — and what brings them together into a compelling and integrated reflection of American society — is not the materialism, sensationalism, ideology, or sheer entertainment value inherent in all of them, in one way or another. It is, rather, the dimension of morality. The issue of right and wrong, of good and bad, runs through all these matters. In some cases the morality dimension is projected on its own, while in others it is juxtaposed with legal issues. Every case has two parallel dynamics: the behaviour of the protagonist is held up for scrutiny, admiration or scorn, while at the same time the reaction of the American public at large or the government is also subjected to endless analysis and exhortation.

The common moral thread running through these and other events in the United States is impressive by any standards: it is, simply, that public figures should conform to both the law of the land and a high standard of moral behaviour that shuns things like marital sexual infidelity, lying, and other such sins. Explicit in this emphasis on high morality is the assumption that people will sin now and then, but that they can be forgiven and

redeemed if they admit their mistakes, explain the reasons for their behaviour, apologise, repent, change their behaviour, and return to the righteous life.

The American stress on morality is sincere, widespread, endlessly entertaining, very profitable for the mass media, and only slightly hypocritical; it is also a critical key for Americans who wish to understand why their government's attacks against Afghanistan and Sudan were not widely supported around the world.

The prevalent reaction in the United States to the bombings of two American embassies in Africa has been to see a sort of cultural-religious assault on the American way of life by a group of Islamic fanatics who are driven by raging, often irrational hatred, fear or other troubled emotions. The tone and substance of the many statements and background briefings by U.S. government officials this week have centered on the idea that the American attacks against facilities in Sudan and Afghanistan were the start of a long war that would last for years or decades, a war that some have even started comparing to the Cold War in terms of its likely nature, intensity, stakes, cost, and duration.

Officials and commentators alike portray the Islamist militants such as Osama Ben Laden as a threat to American civilisation, one that has to be fought with vigour and determination. Some commentators say that Americans are being attacked simply because they are Americans. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said that the United States has "to deal over the long run with what is the very serious threat to our way of life."

The powerful morality factor in American life requires that public issues be framed in black-and-white, good-and-bad terms. This is the natural consequence of a nation born on the basis of a quest for religious and political freedom, and now heavily defined by the free market's tendency to make everything in life — including the presidency and the world — an entertainment-based marketable commodity. This is evident in what has happened after the shocking, unacceptable attacks against the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es-Salam. The United States has identified Osama Ben Laden's group as the vanguard of the enemy that threatens American civilisation and its globalising mission, and the U.S. has now declared long-term war against this enemy. American actions, it seems, will be unilateral, global, violent, and based purely on what Washington perceives to be appropriate.

All the world, including the Middle East, agrees with the United States in rejecting terror as an instrument of policy; but, most of the world also rejects the American

habit of unilateral military action as a response to or deterrent of terror. The fact that so many people in the Middle East and around the world who reject terrorism also do not enthusiastically support the American bombing of alleged terrorist facilities should cause morally exuberant Americans to explore the reasons for this. In between being bombed and bombing others in an endless cycle of senseless violence, Americans would do well to examine their country's role and actions around the world, to see if defective or double-standard American policies may explain why unilateral American militarism as a response to terror is not enthusiastically supported in many other countries. Such an assessment, to be useful, should take place within an intellectual and cultural context that is slightly more sophisticated than the simplistic, black-and-white televised hyper-morality that has come to define American society. There are times when the world of American television and the world at large do not overlap, and this is one of those times.

The striking thing about both the terror attacks against American targets and the solo American military reactions is how routine and regular they have become in the last two decades. Much of the terror and violence can be traced back to the relationship between the United States and the greater Middle East. This tragic, senseless violence will not achieve the rights or aims of any party involved in it. But it is also real and recurring, and is deeply rooted in the behaviour of states, groups and individuals who all claim to act on the basis of moral, religious and legalistic values.

Morality is a fine guide for the behaviour of individuals and states, if it is sincere, consistent, and universally applied. It becomes less useful when it is selective and discriminating in its beneficiaries, which is the main charge against American policy in the Middle East. This does not justify anti-American terror; but it does largely explain why America finds little support for its attacks against alleged terror facilities. The strong linkage between moralistic behaviour, the United States, and Middle Eastern realities requires more serious assessment, alongside the global quest to stamp out terror as a policy instrument.

Terror will not go away by itself, even if Barbara Walters, Jesse Jackson, and Oprah Winfrey tell it to go away. The wider context that breeds terror and violence must be addressed with less emotional moralising, and more cool-headed rationality. That wider context, like the violence itself, repeatedly leads back to the Middle East. Is this coincidental, or rationally explainable?



Letters

Bombs away

To the editor:

OBVIOUSLY MONICA did a bad job helping the president of the United States recall their little tete-a-tete. So much so that he felt an overwhelming urge to go and bomb two countries just to take his mind away from that failed romance. However, having said that, the claim that the bombings were simply a ploy to divert public attention, as the media is fond of implying, are simply preposterous. A man in Clinton's position has nothing more to lose in terms of respect. The true reason for the attacks on Sudan and Afghanistan is explained the utter confusion in U.S. foreign policy matters.

The information the U.S. "intelligence community" allegedly gathered from three Kenyan fishermen and upon which the U.S. administration decided to act was all concocted. The point that desperately needs clarification in this whole Western B movie is if the U.S. administration was sure that the factory was producing VX nerve gas for terrorists and not simply for the recreational use of the Sudanese government then how does Washington explain

attacking such a facility in the middle of a densely populated capital without fear of leakage?

Assuming VX gas has the same effect on the Sudanese as on other humans, a safe assumption in my opinion, then the loss of innocent lives had the factory really been producing VX gas would be hard to justify, even by the U.S. media.

The unfortunate fact remains that the U.S. needed to send a clear message after the Kenya/Tanzania bombings and it did, but as to the contents of the message and at whom it was directed, no one is certain.

While the coming U.N. attempts at damage control to retain a sense of its credibility and integrity after this fiasco promises to be a prime time hit comedy, I do not think it will be entertaining enough for anyone who feels that the concept of a world community has vanished to be replaced by a feudal system where might is right.

Ahmad Tabban
Amman

Drift between Arab Muslims and Christians pleases outside forces

By Ray Hanania

IT CERTAINLY is not intentional, but there is a growing drift between Muslim and Christian Arab interests that powerful forces wish to see continue.

Years ago, the world spoke in terms of the Arab World as the foundation of the Middle East crisis and addressed the issues as such.

Today, the focus is on the Muslim World and Islam. And, while many Muslims must enthusiastically welcome the recognition, they may not be seeing how the narrowing of the focus is not only injuring their causes but is weakening the Arab cause as well.

This separation of Christians from Muslims by the Western media and politicians is noticeable in the most recent events in the Middle East and it is intentional.

On the one hand, pro-Israeli groups have battled for years to separate Christians from Muslims in order to make their case easier to sell to the Christian-based Western civilisations.

Now, they are finally seeing this occur.

Divisions have always existed between Muslims and Christian Arabs, but they have been swept under the rug, treated like a case of leprosy, ignored when surfaced, and castigated when approached.

There are many potential causes for this development, and if Muslims and Christians do not recognise the signs and begin addressing the problems, the division will only serve to undermine both their interests while strengthening the interests of Israel.

Offered in no specific order of importance or weight, some of the factors include:

1. There is a continual effort by enemies of the Arab World to see the role of Christians downplayed as much as possible

in order to incite anti-Muslim feelings among Christians in the West.

2. Undercurrents of Christian and Muslim Arab discord exist. But rather than addressing the issues and taking steps to heal them, community leaders on both sides are opting to pretend they don't exist. Christian and Muslim Arabs have failed to take the initiative to discuss this problem, believing that by not talking about it, the problem will go away.

3. There has been a rise in Islamic organisations in the United States and in the West. And while this is good in terms of clarifying Muslim related issues to an ignorant Western media and government leaders, there has been no similar rise in Christian Arab based organisations. These high profile Islamic organisations are becoming more politically involved, and are an extension of the already existing network of Islamic mosques and religious foundations that exist. On the other hand, Christian-based organisations remain founded on local church matters and there are no significant Christian Arab political organisations.

4. The discussion on issues involving the Middle East has taken on a heavy Muslim based slant, supported by authoritative Muslim organisations in America, for example, and the media, which seeks to portray issues as controversial as possible. Christian Arab issues are being left along the roadside of this fast-paced discussion cycle.

5. The American public, for example, and communities throughout the world, are equating all Middle East issues with Muslim issues. And, therefore, Arabs are being equated as Muslims. The perception is losing its religious diversity to intentional

stereotyping and unintentional failure to address the issue in a Christian-Muslim fashion.

6. Anti-Arab hate groups that are fundamentally based in Christianity, and driving wedges between Muslims and Christians. The most notable are Neo-Nazi activists who, playing down Nazism's historic hatred of the Arab peoples, wish to form an alliance with Muslims. Nazi groups heavily criticised in the media are trying to identify with similarly persecuted Muslim groups.

7. Christian and Muslim leaders sometimes play into the hands of the separation of Christians and Muslim interests. They are now applying a more rigid political partisanship test to forming new alliances and will not work with Christians who espouse political views they oppose, such as support of the Palestinian-Israeli peace accords. A good example was the recent formation of a support group in Chicago for a Palestinian targeted by Israeli injustice and American complicity, Mohammad Jarad. Some members of the Muslim leadership specifically stated their desire to keep certain notable Christians out of the support group, according to Christian leaders who are participants in the group.

8. As Middle East issues take on a more Muslim profile, many Christian Arabs are opting to withdraw and remain silent in the public debate, sensing the drift between the two groups as a minefield not worth addressing.

9. The Christian presence in the Middle East continues to decline at a steady pace, including in Palestine.

10. Religious quota-type guidelines are still sometimes relied upon in the formation of leadership groups in Arab circles.

Although it is intended to help keep Christians involved, it conveys a sense of privilege that only feeds into the differences. A good example of this was the decision to create several "Christian Seats" in the PNA elections to help guarantee the election of Christians to the legislative council there. This kind of policy is a double edged sword that, not addressed properly only feeds into the divisions rather than assisting to bring the two natural allies closer together.

Christians and Muslims, historically, have fought side by side against all kinds of aggression.

Egypt's Gamal Abdul Nasser spoke of the need to strengthen the Arab cause by identifying it through Arab nationalism. Today, Arab nationalism is taking a back seat to the rise of political Islam and the absence of a strong Christian Arab presence.

The failure of the Arab community to address this troubling trend is indicative of the very reason why it exists.

Arab American Muslim and Christian groups must join together to address these issues among themselves and develop a strategy that would deny our enemies the ability to succeed in pushing us further apart.

These are real issues that, instead of being addressed, are causing internal divisions and emotional debate because they are being ignored.

We must return to Arab nationalism before it becomes too late.

The writer is an Palestinian American journalist and author. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Slump in hardship

By Alan Martin

MASERU — Johannes Khumalo is a broken man with a painful dream.

Until his retrenchment four years ago, Khumalo prospered for his wife and several children by working in the gold mines across the border in South Africa.

"I was desperate and destitute — I had 3,000 rand severance pay — the 20-year veteran of the mines — hopes against hope for a chance to return to the famed 'City of Gold'."

Almost every morning, Khumalo and about 40 other laid-off workers can be seen outside the offices of the mine-recruiting agency in Maseru.

On some days, a man in green with a white shirt and a few workers and quick to shepherd them into their nearby office to sign a contract.

The man in green has no appeared for a long time and left the small, mountainous "kingdom" in the "city" has become increasing bleak.

"I have many problems to solve, but no money," says Khumalo. "There are always quarrels with my children over the blame for not having money."

Since 1987, a slump in the South African mining industry has resulted in the lay-off of more than 200,000 miners, with devastating effects on many rural economies in southern Africa. Lesotho, a "third world" country —

has been the hardest hit. In the last 18 months, dozens of the industry analysts predict a "worst-ever" slump to hit the gold market.

Miners came to a head in January when a prolonged period of high rand and low gold prices threatened the profitability of the local market and left the

mineworkers' Union of South Africa (NUM), the choice not to accept the dismissal, demanded by the

Mayors plan citizen involvement in decision making

By Rey Rodriguez

MEXICO CITY — Mayors and representatives of 22 Latin American and Caribbean nations have pledged to promote decentralisation and citizen participation as the only way to overcome pressing urban problems.

Delegates, called together recently under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), concluded that the municipalities are "privileged places for citizen participation" and key spaces for building "democratic governance."

In order to enrich the process, they exchanged experiences on urban policies, citizen participation in public life, security, the demographic explosion and job creation. UNESCO ideas on the issue were presented by its Director General Federico Mayor.

The debate, entitled "citizen participation, democratic governance and culture of peace," took globalisation as a point of departure.

This process, even if representing economic modernisation and democratic change for Latin America on the one hand, also generates marginalisation, extreme poverty and exclusion on racial and gender bases on the other, said those present.

The Mexico City Declaration, made at the end of the meeting, described the municipality as a suitable space for working on state reform and changing attitudes amongst the citizenry.

"By changing forms of government and social practices, participation builds local and national democratic governance, makes government management efficient and facilitates the solution of problems," stated the declaration.

The experience of the Mexican capital was held up as a shining example in the seminar. The 16 delegations under Mayor of Mexico, Cuauhtemoc Cardenas started to organise public audiences and create instruments to achieve public participation.

When Cardenas first came to power in December 1997, he set up a Consultative Council for the Procurator of Public Justice and Security putting an integral participation programme into action for crime prevention in 15 conflict ridden neighbourhoods.

In the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil, the method of citizen participation in drawing up the public budget and in financial control of the municipality "had a favourable outcome on the political culture and climate," said a former mayor of this city, Tarso Genro.

The seminar also touched on other initiatives adopted by local governments like the creation of neighbourhood committees and policies in Caracas, Venezuela, and the decision of the

mayor's office of Rosario, Argentina, to spend 51 per cent of the budget on social programmes.

The participants agreed the challenge for Latin America is to deepen democracy, but this process will only be possible if there is political decentralisation bringing power to the people and economic decentralisation generating opportunities for all.

For mayors like Cila Maria Calderon, from San Juan, Puerto Rico, democratic governance does not exist without citizen participation, as "both are important for a culture of peace."

The governors said people participation is essential in tackling violence and insecurity, common enemies for the region's cities.

In Caracas, for example, special boxes were set up to collect complaints from the citizenry against acts of corruption and violence, while in San Juan the neighbourhood "Anti-Crime Alliance" groups were set up.

The Latin American mayors promised to confront the problems stemming from globalisation, like demographic concentration and the abandonment of social welfare policies by the state, while deepening democracy.

Mayor of Caracas, Antonio Ledezma, recommended the leaders avoid seeing decentralisation or centralisation as the way to solve all their problems. Flexibility and participation are the true keys, he said.

Given the great variety of experiences and points of view stated in the seminar in Mexico, UNESCO's Mayor proposed building a new network of Latin American cities capable of following the example of the presentations favouring the solution of common problems.

This idea was backed by Cardenas, who said joint action could open spaces for collaboration turning the concept of sacrificing the majority of the city populations for the benefit of economic development on its head.

Mayor said the "dominant models have made it clear development does not only mean economic growth, because today the ethical issues should occupy a more relevant place amongst the concerns of governments of big cities."

By insisting on the need for people to speak of their expectations and participate in public life, Mayor gave a modern citizenry version of Descartes' immortal words saying "I participate, therefore I am."

Those present at the seminar recognised their projects to encourage democratisation in the cities would take a more or less long time to come about, fighting against years of a political culture where the government is the prime and only mover, scoring participative efforts.

— Inter Press

Kohl pulls out all stops in uphill fight

By Erik Kirschbaum
Reuters

BONN — With only five weeks left before Germany's election, Chancellor Helmut Kohl has turned to heated words and hardball tactics to try to revive his flagging re-election campaign.

Appeals to patriotism, populist warnings about too many foreigners in Germany, "red scare" attacks against communists, and ferocious assaults on the character of his opponent, Gerhard Schroeder, are all part of Kohl's attack. The final showdown against his more popular challenger began at a mass rally on Sunday in Dortmund, with an outburst of patriotism and warnings that the opposition Social Democrats were unfit to lead Germany.

But political analysts doubt whether the shrill attacks and patriotic appeals will help Kohl win a record fifth term when the votes are counted on September 27. Dietmar Herz, a political scientist at Bonn University, said Germans prefer political consensus to polemics. "Kohl is growing more aggressive than ever because his own supporters are nervous and frustrated," Herz said. "The hard line is aimed at shoring up support in his own ranks. But his attempts to polarise will fail because Germans want consensus."

Manfred Guehlner, director of the Forsa research institute, said flirtation with far-right themes was dangerous because it could invite voters to back far-right parties. "Many will decide they prefer the original far-right parties," he said. "The strategy is dangerous and shows they are frustrated that nothing else has worked to narrow the gap. Kohl may reach CDU (Christian Democratic Union) voters, but he's not adding new voters."

Brushing aside polls showing him behind, Kohl is throwing every weapon into the fray. Finance Minister Theo Waigel and other CDU loyalists are being sent to the fore to pummel Schroeder with diatribes. The chancellor himself fired the

heavy artillery in Dortmund, sounding a warning of a dark future for Germany without him at the helm.

"Our country depends on it," he said, adding that his love of fatherland was his only motive. "We have to defend our republic."

The 68-year-old chancellor plans to campaign virtually non-stop between now and election day in a dash through 60 towns and cities that he hopes will help erase a four-point deficit in voter surveys. In recent speeches, he has made clear he will take no prisoners in his uphill fight. Kohl slams Schroeder as a phoney and calls the SPD a dangerous band of leftists who will climb into bed with communists to get to power. He predicts political instability, rising unemployment and economic ruin if the SPD wins.

"Schroeder is lying to the people, he is lying to people on pensions and he is lying to the young people," said Kohl.

Even peace in Europe is the work of Kohl and his Christian Democrats, German voters are being told.

"Peace for Germany and Europe was never as certain as it is today," Kohl said. "That is thanks, above all else, to us."

By contrast, Schroeder and SPD leaders have refrained from personal attacks on Kohl. Schroeder in fact often praises Kohl for "historical achievements" in reunifying Germany. But Kohl has no intention of returning the favour.

"Schroeder promises everyone everything," Kohl said. "But I don't think the majority of Germans are so dumb and unintelligent to comprehend that it is all just a big show."

Even Schroeder's personal life has become fair game. A popular souvenir T-shirt bears the slogan: "Three women can't be wrong about Schroeder," a biting reference to the fact that Schroeder has been divorced three times.

Bernhard Wessels, a political scientist at Berlin's Free University, said he doubted that Kohl had a chance of winning, but



Helmut Kohl

believed he had no choice but to attack the opposition with all his firepower in the hope of winning back conservative voters.

"By appealing to law-and-order values, Kohl is trying to win back those who drifted away to far-right parties," Wessels said. "But it's a risky strategy because it pushes to the back burner issues like the economy, where he is actually quite strong."

Even members of Kohl's CDU who appear the slightest bit disloyal are being shunted aside for the climactic battle. Defence Minister Volker Ruehe, for instance, was not allowed to speak to the Dortmund rally even though he has become one of the CDU's most popular figures. His crime? He apparently made a veiled criticism of the election strategy focused on Kohl.

"That shows he's willing to do almost anything to win," said Herz at Bonn University.

Slump in goldmining industry brings hardship and economic dislocation

By Alan Martin

MASERU — Johannes Khesuoe, a broken man with a precious dream.

Until his retrenchment four years ago, Khesuoe provided for his wife and seven children by working in the goldmines across the border in South Africa.

Now desperate and destitute — his 3,000 rand severance package long since spent — the 20-year veteran of the mines hopes against hope for a chance to return to Egoli, the famed "City of Gold."

Almost every morning at eight, Khesuoe and about 100 other laid-off workers wait outside the offices of a mine-recruiting agency in Maseru.

On some days, a man in a green suit comes out, chooses a few workers and quickly shepherds them into the nearby office to sign a contract.

The man in green has not appeared for a long time, and life in the small, mountainous "kingdom in the sky" has become increasingly bleak.

"I have many problems to solve, but no money," says Khesuoe. "There are always quarrels with my children, who blame me for not having money."

Since 1987, a slump in the South African mining industry has resulted in the lay-off of more than 200,000 miners, with devastating effects on many rural economies in southern Africa. Lesotho — sometimes described as a "fourth world" country — has been the hardest hit, with 17,000 retrenched in the last 18 months, due to what industry analysts describe as the "worst-ever crisis" to hit the gold market.

Matters came to a head last January when a prolonged period of high rand value and low gold prices shrank the profitability of the local market and left the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), the leading trade union, with no choice but to accept the dismissals demanded by the

mining industry.

"This has had a very bad impact on our economy and society," says Puseletso Salae, coordinator of the Basotho Mineworkers Labour Cooperative. "Communities are falling apart, especially in the rural areas."

For nearly a century, pools of cheap migrant labourers from all over southern Africa have gravitated to the mines, the backbone of the South African economy. Most are illiterate herdsmen or ill-educated villagers for whom going to the mines is almost a rite of passage.

With up to 30 per cent of miners' paychecks being remitted to their families back home, the industry is one of the region's largest sources of income and employment.

But as the remittances have dried up, so have local economies, says Salae. Few families have enough money to send their children beyond primary school.

Family cohesion is one of the first victims of the lay-offs. Divorce, although not always legal, has skyrocketed. It is not uncommon for a woman — unhappy about her husband's alcoholism or used to being the sole decision-maker in the household — to tell her husband she is going to visit her parents and not return, adds Salae.

"Many boys who are not able to go to school end up leaving the rural areas for Maseru where they become Tsotsis (thugs)," he says. "Girls also come to Maseru to get work, but most end up as prostitutes. This is a direct result of the retrenchments."

As the poor are pushed deeper into poverty by the retrenchments, unions and mineworkers organisations are calling on the industry to halt the layoffs.

Their appeal intensified following the July announcement by Gold Fields, the second largest gold company in South Africa, that its operating profits — largely as a result of currency gains in the wake of the rand's collapse against the dollar — had

soared to R207 million (\$439,344,362), from R17 (\$27,868,852) million the previous year.

"Rural economies that are completely dependent on the mines have been blasted by the retrenchments," says Kate Philip, chief executive officer of the Johannesburg-based Mineworkers Development Agency. "The NUM made all kinds of concessions to get the industry out of the recent crisis. Now is the time to retire."

"They're now making record profits. The bonanza thing is to invest in programmes or jobs for those that paid the price in the recent crisis," she says. "Anything else is cynical and dishonourable."

Philip is also lobbying mining companies to contribute to a R80 million (\$131,147,540) project aimed at promoting self-employment schemes among discarded workers.

Supported largely by the British government and the United Nations Development Programme, the project plans to trigger economic growth in rural areas most affected by the lay-offs.

Cooperative poultry and vegetable farms, bakeries and the brewing of indigenous marula beer are among the projects under way.

"The idea is to start with local products for local consumption," says Philip. "But that locks people into low margins and poor markets. The challenge is to build on that, to identify more value-added opportunities, facilitate a product's development and create linkages into more affluent markets."

The hope is that such schemes will also break the cycle of despondence and dependence gripping many former miners, such as Khesuoe, and their families.

The writer is a journalist reporting for Gemini News Service from southern Africa on a fellowship funded by Canada's International Development Research Centre.

— Gemini News

Kerala tribe accuses Indian biologists of stealing knowledge

By J. John and
Sindhu Menon

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, India — When the director of the Tropical Botanical Garden and Research Institute (TBGRI), based in the southern Indian city of Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala state, won the prestigious United Nations Borlaug Award this year, he was praised for going by the rule book in harnessing plants for medicinal use.

But a group of tribes people from the state is not so sure. They say the institute — a Kerala government body — is cheating them of profits made from the industrial production of a medicinal plant grown by the tribe.

And biodiversity campaigners say the U.N. got it wrong for commending the institute for its adherence to the U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which seeks to ensure that profits from the commercial use of the world's biological wealth is shared equitably, including by those who have nurtured and developed knowledge about plants for centuries.

The row centres around what TBGRI calls its "accidental discovery" of a plant with supposedly extraordinary therapeutic properties in the Western Ghats — a hilly, biologically-rich part of south-western India. Known as Arogyappacha (biological name: Tribopis Zeylanicus sub sp. Travancoricus Burkill ex Narayanan), the plant has been grown and used for generations by members of an impoverished local tribe called Kani.

The institute's version of the story runs like this: a team of Indian ethno-biologists led by TBGRI Director and Borlaug-winner Palpu Pushpangadan was trekking through the Western Ghats to survey

the tribe in December 1987 when the scientists complained of tiredness.

But two Kani guides to the expedition, who had been munching some "small blackish fruits," were found to be energetic and agile. The curious scientists followed suit and "felt a sudden flush of energy and strength."

For seven years after that, the institute subjected the plant to a battery of scientific tests before coming up with a health tonic called Jeevani — a cocktail of four herbs, in which the major ingredient is Arogyappacha.

"Jeevani has been standardised, and all pharmacological details are documented. It is a safe anti-stress, anti-fatigue, appetite-promoting and restorative herbal tonic for people of all ages. And unlike the Korean Ginseng, it is devoid of traces of steroid or any other addictive substance," says TBGRI scientist T.G. Vinod Kumar.

In 1994, TBGRI transferred the process-technology of Jeevani for commercial production to the Coimbatore Arya Vaidya Pharmacy (CAF), a market leader in indigenous Ayurvedic drugs, for a period of seven years.

According to CAF's chief of Product Development G.G. Gangadharan, the terms of the transfer obliges TBGRI to share with Kani half of the know-how fees of Rs. one million (about \$25,000) and half the two per cent royalty on future sales of the drug.

TBGRI worked out an ambitious plan to commercially cultivate Arogyappacha in some 2,000 acres of land. According to their calculations, an

acre should yield an income of about Rs. 100,000 (\$2,500) over two years. The leaves can be plucked three a year.

The institute says the money will go to 2,500 Kani families who are eventually to cultivate and supply the plants to CAF at a price agreed with TBGRI. "Our decision to share the benefit is a unique attempt to recognise the Intellectual Property Rights of tribals," said Dr. Rajasekharan, head of TBGRI's Ethnomedicine Department.

But the Kani tell a different tale. "There are about 300 people working

Campaigners say there is an urgent need for developing countries to enact patent laws that would recognise the Intellectual Property Rights of indigenous communities.

with TBGRI, but no tribal has been appointed," says Shaji Kani of Vithura village.

Appukkuttan Kani, the elected chief of the village local government, says, "The Botanical Garden uses our people to collect plants and herbs. They are given only daily wages of Rs. 30 (less than a dollar), and never compensated for the value of the plants and herbs. Moreover, we do not know what they do with the plants and herbs," he added.

Whatever the truth of the matter, the wrangle has thrown up important questions on commercial exploitation of plants — just when biodiversity-rich developing countries are being increasingly eyed by Western drug companies as a cheap source of raw material.

The Intellectual Property Rights of products and

processes is a key instrument by which Western multinational companies exploit the resources and economies of developing countries. But as the Kani's complaints show, this so-called "biopiracy" can happen within developing nations too.

TBGRI scientist Rajasekharan says the Kani tribals "never used Arogyappacha as a medicine. And Arogyappacha is only one of the ingredients of Jeevani."

But biodiversity campaigner Suman Sahay feels that TBGRI, by taking out a patent for Jeevani, has "effectively challenged the principle of Common Heritage of Mankind, which considers all genetic resources the property of everybody, with no particular ownership."

The story raises a further question: did TBGRI observe a critical component of CBD — seeking Prior Informed Consent (of the Kani in this case) — before acquiring the knowledge-base and using it for commercial production? Article 15 of CBD has this to say:

• Access to genetic resources shall be subject to prior informed consent of the Contracting Party providing such resources, unless otherwise determined by that Party; and

• Each Contracting Party shall endeavour to develop and carry out scientific research based on genetic resources provided by other Contracting Parties with the full participation of... such Contracting Parties.

In an interview after receiving the Borlaug award, Pushpangadan explained the rationale of the TBGRI model: "Biological Diversity is the sovereign right of a

nation. It cannot be acquired without the prior informed consent of those who possess the knowledge.

Whether this right should also extend to communities within nations is currently a hotly-debated issue. Campaigners say there is an urgent need for developing countries to enact patent laws that would recognise the Intellectual Property Rights of indigenous communities.

Many hold that the Kani are eminently suitable candidates to be accorded just such a right. They have a rich tradition of tribal medicine practitioners who, in 1996, formed into an "Adivasi (tribal) Traditional Medical Practitioners' Cooperation Society."

But these practitioners have not been involved in the evolution of the Arogyappacha tonic, according to the tribals. However, the tribals have the support of a state-wide body of tribal medical practitioners under the Kerala Institute for Research, Training and Development Studies of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Its Director S. Vishwanathan Nair, says: "The Intellectual Property Rights or economic benefits are not reaching the tribals. It is channelled through private monopoly." To top it, the Kani complain, TBGRI has not parted with any of the cash it has been given by CAF. Instead, it has set up a Kani Tribal Trust of its own, with the two guides as its president and secretary, to distribute the amount.

"The trust should be exclusively managed by the Kani and it should give primacy to traditional tribal medical practitioners," Appukkuttan Kani suggests.

— Panos

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Study reveals 10-15 per cent unemployment rate among 1993-1997 medical graduates

**** ACCORDING TO** a most recent study prepared by the Jordan Medical Association, unemployment among doctors who have graduated less than four years ago, or between 1993 and 1997, is in the range of 10-15 per cent. Basem Kiswani who conducted the study, explained to the Jordan Times that seven per cent of those unemployed did not have private clinics and were operating from their homes.

Kiswani indicated that a sample of doctors who graduated in 1997 were polled and the result was an unemployment rate of between five and eight per cent among this category. Disguised unemployment was about 8.5 per cent for specialists and between 15 and 20 per cent for general practitioners. Kiswani pointed out noting that a three per cent error margin should be taken into consideration.

The study said that there is a misconception among the people in general concerning the high income of medical doctors. "The study shows that those with high income do not exceed five per cent of all

the doctors and this is a limited percentage," Kiswani said.

He attributed the rise in unemployment to the high number of graduates during the 80s and 90s at a time when the Arab Gulf states were absorbing less numbers of medical graduates. "Then came the Gulf crisis which resulted in the return of large numbers of Jordanian doctors to the Kingdom to work in the private sector," the study explained.

"Most fresh graduates are awaiting employment at the Ministry of Health and Medical Care or other public institutions while others are opening private clinics which do not generate a suitable income for a profession of a doctor," the study said in explaining the aspect of disguised unemployment. The study added: "What made things worse was the halt to appointments in various ministries in addition to the decline in the number of government doctors who seek retirement or early retirement" (Al Dustour + Al Ra'i).

Cabinet offers sales tax defaulters alternative

**** THE COUNCIL OF Ministers** has approved recommendation presented by the Department of Customs to exempt the institutions which have not paid the sales tax from paying double the amount as a penalty charge, if they pay 25 per cent of such a fine. This decision comes in line with the government's intention not to overburden the industrial and service companies under

the sales tax umbrella and to minimise the number of cases transferred to the Customs Court. That would reflect positively on the general revenue and reduce the administrative and financial costs that would be incurred for taking the defaulters to court. (Al Ra'i + Al Dustour).

Saudi paper says private sector can import barley

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia has allowed the private sector to import barley for the first time in 22 years, which market sources said signalled an end to the government subsidy on the grain, a Saudi newspaper has reported.

"Companies and establishments from the Saudi private sector have begun importing barley from abroad similar to the Grain Silos and Flour Mills Organisation which had been solely in charge of such a task for 22 years," the Arabic language daily Al-Eqtisadiyya reported.

It said the decision was prompted by the drop in international barley prices. The newspaper quoted market sources as saying that the move "practically means that government subsidy for barley has been completely lifted after the drop in world prices, whereby there is no justification to reduce its prices to consumers."

Saudi Arabia is the world's biggest barley importer. Saudi newspapers have said the country's barley needs have been declining since 1992.

The London-based Al Hayat newspaper last month quoted Agriculture Minister Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Bin Muammar as saying the kingdom needed only 500,000 tonnes of the grain this year.

Arab Bank moves against Jordan Tobacco and Cigarettes Company

By Mohammad Ben Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Court of First Instance has appointed a caretaker to manage the debt-ridden Jordan Tobacco and Cigarettes (JTC) Company after Arab Bank sued the firm for defaulting on repayments on a JD5.5 million debt, bankers and lawyers said on Monday.

Ali Farid Saad, the company's general manager, described the bank's decision as "hasty" and said JTC had enough assets to cover its debts.

He could not comment on the volume of the firm's overall debts but said the JTC, Jordan's oldest cigarette company manufacturing local brands names such as Gold Star and Reem, has appealed the court decision.

Business sources have

blamed most of the financial losses on competition caused three years ago by the entry of two major manufacturers of cigarettes under Western franchise forcing JTC to lose around 70 per cent of the market share.

"The JTC's debts to the Arab Bank are accumulating every year and the company is unable to pay interest on loans taken," said Arab Bank lawyer Sweilem Nasir.

"Negotiations between the Arab Bank and the company lasted for two years but the company was unable to meet its financial obligations," he told the Jordan Times.

The court decided to appoint a caretaker "to safeguard the Arab Bank's interest and to prod the firm's management to re-evaluate its policies," Nasir said.

He also claimed that JTC has been unable to pay debts owed to other banks.

But Saad rejected Nasir's claims and added that the JTC and Arab Bank have not yet met to decide on the amount of money owed to the bank.

"The company has deposited more than needed sufficient collateral with the bank which can cover the debt," he told the Jordan Times.

"The company's agreement with Arab Bank stipulates that in case of bankruptcy, Arab Bank gets priority in debt repayment," Saad said.

Nasir said the caretaker will remain in his post until the bank reaches an agreement with the JTC to guarantee repayment of debts.

According to the investment law, if the two parties do not reach an agreement,

the caretaker will report the company to the Ministry of Trade which in turn would form a special committee to study the company's final status.

The committee would meet with the company's general assembly to make recommendations to solve the problem. If no agreement is reached, the committee can ask either to liquidate the firm, raise its paid up capital to enable it to repay its debts, or form a new board to run it.

Jordan Tobacco and Cigarettes Company was established in 1931 and has 400 employees on its payroll. It produces different brands of cigarettes including Philadelphia, Gold Star, Top Twenty, Kamal, Reem International, Camel, Gold Coast and Aspen.

Islamic banking seen having cushion against Asian financial crisis

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Islamic banking is expected to win a boost from Asia's financial crisis, which has exposed the deficiencies of the conventional banking system, a regional conference here was told recently.

"The recent financial crisis in South East Asia has brought out some of the deficiencies of the conventional banking system," said Syed Jaafar Azman, vice-president of the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank.

He said the conventional banking system emphasised a fixed return on loans and securities and did not properly focus on the viability of projects being financed, as the return to the bank was guaranteed.

"This is particularly true for short-term commercial lending," he told the Asia Islamic Banking and Finance Conference here.

Syed Jaafar said Islamic banks, since their lending was on profit-and-loss sharing basis, had to focus on the viability of the operations they were financing,

both short and long term. The financial crisis has taken a toll on Asia's banking system, with many debt-ridden banks forced to close or merge with the stronger ones.

Many banks suffered from overexposure to the speculative-driven real estate sector.

Central, commercial and investment bankers as well as financial consultants and government officials from 19 countries in the Middle East, East Asia, South East Asia and South Asia took part in the conference.

Syed Jaafar said the focus on the viability of the financed operations usually placed Islamic banks in a better position to weather difficulties, like the current Asian crisis.

"Furthermore, the lower levels of leverage, at which Islamic banks operate as compared to conventional banks, also provides adequate cushion to these Islamic banks in times of such crises," he said.

But Syed Jaafar acknowledged that given the present

size of the Islamic banks, they were ill-equipped to offer the comprehensive range of financial services that could be provided by the emerging mega banking and financial institutions.

"Serious focus of attention and efforts may be necessary towards the creation of larger entities through mergers, etcetera, which can compete with these emerging mega banking and financial institutions and which can offer a diversity of services," he said.

The essential feature of Islamic banking is that it is interest-free.

Islam prohibits Muslims from taking or giving interest or "riba" regardless of the purpose for which loans are made and regardless of the rates at which interest is charged. Banks rely instead on a form of profit-sharing.

There are about 200 registered Islamic Banks in the world, conference documents showed.

Reports have said that if the present rate of growth continues, within a decade,

Islamic banks would handle 40-to-50 per cent of total savings of the Muslim World.

Abdullah Tarmugi, Singapore Minister for Muslim Affairs, told the conference that Islamic banking had been growing at about 15 per cent per year.

"In the view of many experts, I am told, it is expected to retain its high rate of growth well into the next century," he said.

Singapore boosted the talks as part of plans to tap the growing pool of Islamic funds of up to \$90 billion worldwide, officials said.

Abdullah said London, a non-Muslim city, had already grabbed the lion's share of Islamic funds and that only a minute portion came to Singapore through trade financing arrangements for oil purchases from China and South Korea.

"Being so much closer to these two countries, Singapore could play a bigger role if we are prepared to make the effort," he said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 1998

By C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

Aries (March 21 to April 19) Looks like you're in and one of your hidden talents will be body thinks you're pretty neat and that's a compliment for you. Well, you're pretty scary situations and you can certainly take a few compliments, especially if they come from a friend.

Taurus (April 20 to May 20) The sun is in Virgo and you are in Libra. It looks like your luck in love is strong. You may be feeling confident enough to project that intimidated you before, but you have to do it alone. It's too much work for that. Give others to help you.

Leo (May 21 to June 21) Everybody is charmed and fascinated by your insights. Everybody is possibly your mate, or a Virgo friend. Well, they really are. It's possible the most critical person you know is one of your biggest fans. He or she is to help you improve your routine. Interpret it and you'll enjoy the day a lot more.

Virgo (June 22 to July 21) Looks like your focus is cleaning again. That could be mentally up old misunderstandings with a roommate or friend. Letters or memos that need to be written to things to family. If there is a family member who is spoken to in a while, send that person a message.

Scorpio (July 22 to August 21) Remember that book you were investigating? Where did you put it? This would be the day to get it out and read it. It looks like you make you could help secure your future.

Sagittarius (August 22 to September 22) Money is still a topic, but you're starting to get more attention. Asking you for favours, although they may be reluctant to pay for them yet. That's okay. You can top this into a good business, once you show them what you can do.

Capricorn (September 23 to October 22) You always work best with a partner. When the other person is there, you tend to be passive and vice versa. That's why everyone thinks you're a good partner. You need the necessary modifications to support them in what they're doing.

Aquarius (October 23 to November 21) Looks like you need that needs your attention. Be assertive. Gather whatever you need or ask questions and don't be afraid to get answers. Be pushy. This thing will be resolved so you can get on to something else.

Pisces (November 22 to December 21) This should be a good day for getting organised. That's the theme: You sometimes think people who plan are mentally ill. It cramps your style to figure out what you're going to be at each place on your agenda, but that may be necessary. Don't fight it. It could be the key to your success.

Aries (December 22 to January 20) Not only do you want to travel, you're also curious about almost everything. It's a little difficult to apply what you're learning right now, however. It looks like there's a connection between the way your routine is established and what you'd like things to be done. Be patient and wait.

Taurus (January 21 to February 19) Travel beckons, but you may have to refuse again. Other things are holding you back for a little longer. Be patient and set a date for later. Treat yourself to a foreign dinner tonight. Although it's not quite what you need, it'll be fun anyway.

Leo (February 20 to March 20) You look good and your confidence is increasing along with your income. Practice that when it comes to spending money. There's something you want, you can't resist it. You can get a better deal on it if you shop around. Don't spend frivolously, even if more money is coming in.

Sign of the month: August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

India to buy 1.2 million tonnes of Omani gas a year

MUSCAT (AFP) — India's Metropolis Gas (MetGas) Company will buy 1.2 million tonnes a year of Omani liquefied natural gas (LNG) starting in late 2001, state-controlled Oman LNG has said.

A preliminary agreement covering the principle commercial terms, including the undisclosed price, was signed between the two companies. Oman LNG said in a statement.

Under the deal, MetGas, a wholly owned subsidiary of U.S.-based Enron International, will take 1.2 million tonnes a year of LNG for 20 years, the statement said.

A final full sales and purchase agreement will be negotiated "over the coming months" before India imports its first LNG, Omani LNG said.

MetGas is Omani LNG's third customer after Japan's Osaka Gas agreed to buy 660,000 tonnes a year from late 2000 and Korea Gas Corporation agreed to buy 4.1 million tonnes a year from 2000, both for 25 years.

Oman LNG is due to produce 6.6 million tonnes a year by 2000 at a \$2 billion plant near Sur in the south of the sultanate.

Indonesia declares four private banks insolvent

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesia has declared four private banks insolvent and unveiled plans to reform the ailing banking system, including the first merger between state-run institutions.

The four insolvent banks were among six private institutions taken over by the Indonesian Bank Restructuring Agency (IBRA) four months ago. "Audits have been com-

pleted for the six large private banks taken over by IBRA in April," said an official document sent to the International Monetary Fund.

"Shareholders rights have been transferred to IBRA, and insolvency declarations have been made in four cases," said the document listing economic and financial policies, copies of which were released here.

The four banks were not

named, but so far the audits on four of the six banks have been made public. The four were Bank Danamon, Bank Umum Nasional, Bank Tiara Asia and Bank PDFCI.

"Negotiations are underway with buyers interested in acquiring some of these banks as going concerns," the document said, adding the banks' non-performing loans will first be transferred to IBRA's Asset

Management Unit (AMU).

On April 4, the government placed seven banks under IBRA management and froze the operations of seven other "unsound banks."

It later pulled state-owned Bank Eksport-Import Indonesia out of IBRA.

The banks that remained under IBRA management were Bank Dagang Nasional Indonesia, Bank Danamon, Bank Umum

Nasional, Bank Tiara Asia, Bank PDFCI and Modern Bank.

"It is not surprising to me that the banks were declared insolvent considering their high level of non-performing loans," Standard and Poor's Singapore-based associate director for financial institutions ratings, Terry Chan, told AFP-Asia.

An AFP-affiliated financial news agency. A banking source close to

one of the six banks said the government's decision to declare the four institutions insolvent was positive because it will end the uncertainty over whether those banks will be closed.

"My understanding is insolvency means the former shareholders are unable to survive the banks. In this case, the declaration should allow the government to find new shareholders," he said.

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Kucera upsets Ivanisevic to win New Haven final

NEW HAVEN (AP) — Karol Kucera earned his first title on United States soil Sunday, beating Goran Ivanisevic 6-4, 5-7, 6-2 in the final of the Pilot Pen International.

The match was a study in contrasts: the steady, unflappable Kucera against the emotional and unpredictable Ivanisevic. On a couple close calls that went against him, the volatile Croat tossed his racket and ripped his shirt.

It also pitted the tour's top server against the top returner. Coming into the tournament, Ivanisevic had 666 aces in 44 matches. Kucera had a 36 per cent return rate in 50 matches.

Kucera broke Ivanisevic four times, including the fifth game of the second set when an apparent Ivanisevic ace was overruled, making it 0-40. Ivanisevic won the next two points, but double-faulted for the game and Kucera took a pivotal 3-2 lead.

He served out for the match, winning it when Ivanisevic sent his return long.

"It's always very tough," said Kucera. "He was serving very, very well today. I am very happy with the way I played today. I hope I'm going to play this well in the U.S. Open."

Ivanisevic had 15 aces to Kucera's eight, but not much else in his arsenal. His usually stinging backhand had little bite or predictability.

The 24-year-old Slovak kept Ivanisevic on the move throughout the match with his offspeed groundstrokes, and fatigue became a factor.

"I was tired. I hit a lot of forehands," Ivanisevic said. "My backhand was like roulette — I had no clue where the ball was going."

He also strongly questioned if the chair umpire or linesmen knew where the ball was going. A serve he thought was an ace, but ruled wide in the ninth game brought Ivanisevic to the net.

After having a few words with the umpire, he stared down a line judge for several seconds.

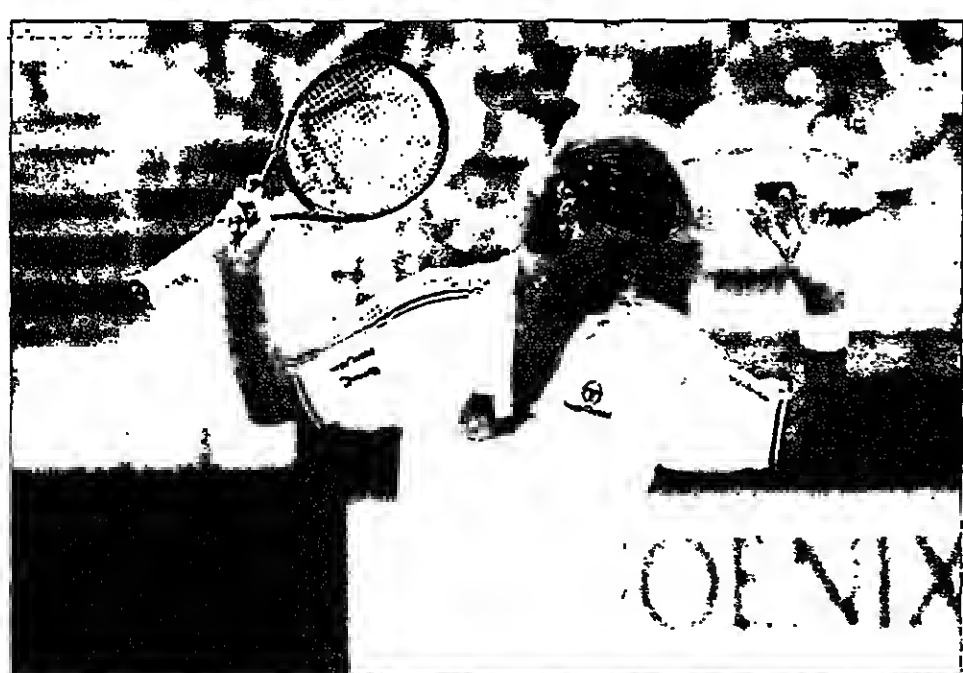
"Instead of 15-Ace, it's love-30. It happened twice and it is a big difference. A couple of bad calls cost me the match," Ivanisevic said.

Ivanisevic, who is 0-5 in U.S. finals, was hard on himself when he missed easy chances. With Kucera serving and up 5-4 in the first set, Ivanisevic battled back from 15-40 to deuce.

When he missed an easy winner, he ripped a large hole in his shirt and had to play the next two points before he could make a



Karol Kucera, of Slovakia, poses with the winner's trophy after he defeated Goran Ivanisevic 6-4, 5-7, 6-2 to win the Pilot Pen International men's singles championship in New Haven, Conn. This was his first tournament win in the United States (AP Photo)



Goran Ivanisevic reacts during his championship round singles match with Karol Kucera of Slovakia. Ivanisevic was defeated and ripped his shirt in disgust after a bad play (AP Photo)

change, losing the game and the set. At the end of the match, Ivanisevic climbed onto the empty umpire's chair while Kucera was accepting his award. He said the view was a comfortable one.

"I saw a lot of nice lines. It is very nice to sit, you know, that is why he makes so many mistakes," he said.

Wenger fears Bergkamp burn out

LONDON (AFP) — Arsene Wenger fears Dennis Bergkamp — and many of the Premiership's top stars — are in danger of suffering from World Cup burn-out.

The Arsenal boss claims that only two games into the new season his Dutch master is experiencing fatigue after Holland, inspired by Bergkamp, reached the semi-finals of France 98.

Wenger said: "Dennis Bergkamp is not at his best at the moment, he knows that."

"But it is mainly physically because he only started training on August 1 and had a small setback injury wise against Manchester United in the Charity Shield."

"And he has played just two games now, one on last Monday against Forest and one at Anfield. He's not as sharp as he used to be, but that is a question of time."

"For us it is important to get our players slowly back to full fitness without us dropping too many points."

Wenger is also worried that later in the season the stamina of Bergkamp and fellow Dutch international, Marc Overmars, may be affected after two seasons of near-continuous football.

But the Highbury chief feels that French midfield stars, Patrick Vieira and Emmanuel Petit, have the ability to stay fit despite their part in the host nation's World Cup success.

He said: "It's not quite the same for the other World Cup players because up-front you need to be really sharp to make a difference but in midfield they have the stamina. Petit and Vieira work really hard, and they look OK."

"We might have a different problem with Bergkamp and Overmars later on in the season because they need more stamina and physical power by then. So they could have a problem around October and November with overall fitness."

"But for Dennis it's a question of sharpness and overall fitness, two different problems really."

Italian drugs chief ready to discuss drugs issue

ROME (AFP) — Italy's top anti-drugs investigator, Ugo Longo, is set to visit London to discuss recent allegations with Chelsea's Italian stars.

Player-coach Gianluca Vialli, Roberto Di Matteo, Gianfranco Zola and Pierluigi Casiraghi had all been expected here on Monday for a session with Longo, who heads an enquiry by the Italian Olympic Committee (CONI).

But CONI officials have had no reply to their faxed invitation.

"At this stage, it might be down to me to go to London and meet them," admitted Ugo, who is interviewing a series of top sporting figures this week.

The drugs issue has been in the spotlight since AS Roma coach Zdenek Zeman warned earlier this month that the Serie A could end up like this year's Tour de France, marred by drugs controversies.

The CONI enquiry is one of several currently underway in Italy, and followed by state prosecutors in Turin and Bologna.

CONI president Mario Pescante had a two-hour meeting in Turin on Monday with state prosecutor Raffaele Guariniello.

Pescante said before testifying: "These investigations (by magistrates) are useful, but people mustn't underestimate the work carried out by the CONI."

"We are the only ones talking openly about this and we are proud of that."

Emerging from the meeting later, Pescante described it as "an extremely useful exchange of views. I think that we can

achieve a result that will be useful both for football and for Italian sport in general."

But he insisted: "In my opinion, the word 'doping' doesn't exist in Italian soccer, and we need a bit more composure on this whole issue, from those who are attacking and from those who are defending themselves."

The Bologna enquiry into the illicit distribution of the banned drug EPO led to police swoops on Monday on three sports doctors and a pharmacist.

The doctors are believed to have either written prescriptions for EPO which did not include the name of the patient or to have prescribed themselves substances which enhance sporting performance.

The pharmacist, who owns a store in the Swiss city of Lugano near the Italian border, is suspected of supplying EPO to chemists' shop in Bologna, where state prosecutor Giovanni Spinoso's enquiry first started.

Spinoso suspects that the shop has been supplying sports teams and clubs with EPO, alongside the perfectly legal trade in restoratives, such as aminoacids, creatine and vitamins, which are not banned.

Italy does not yet have a law against doping, although there is no shortage of drug legislation for when the Italian Parliament reconvenes in September.

In the meantime, magistrates are making do with existing article in the penal code against the "administering of medicines which are a danger to public health."

Jail steroid users, AOC urges Australian legislators

SYDNEY (AFP) — Fearful the 2000 Sydney Olympics could be dubbed the 'Drug Games', the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) Monday called on the federal government to jail those athletes caught using anabolic steroids.

AOC president John Coates has written to Prime Minister John Howard and all state premiers in a plea for "hard" drugs in sport to be treated as narcotics.

The AOC has also asked for potential Olympians to sign a letter promising to repay all financial grants from the AOC if they test positive to a banned drug.

Under the AOC's drug reform submission anyone convicted of trafficking in anabolic androgenic steroids, Beta 2 agonists (other than salbutamol, salmeterol and terbutaline), peptide and gly-

coprotein hormones or analogues, could face life imprisonment. An athlete testing positive to the drugs could be jailed for up to two years.

"If we are to ensure that the 2000 Olympics Games are not to be remembered as the 'Drug Games' immediate action is required," Coates told a press conference here Monday.

"The sporting community in Australia has adopted a strong stance against the use of drugs in sport but the sporting community needs the assistance of all Australian governments to stamp out the practices by which our athletes are supplied with these insidious drugs."

Coates said the non-medical use of anabolic steroids in Australia was greater than heroin and cocaine and a survey of 11 to 17-year-old schoolchildren in the most

populous state of New South Wales showed about four percent were using anabolic steroids.

The AOC chief said if the legislation had been in place last January when Chinese swimmer Yuan Yuan was found with 13 vials of a human growth hormone in her luggage on the way to the World Swimming Championships in Perth, she would have had to face the courts.

Coates said he had written a letter informing International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch of the AOC's initiatives and the proposal would be raised at next year's world conference on doping.

He said the AOC's stance was the toughest to be taken by any country.

Greene and Johnson lead U.S stars at GP

LAUSANNE (AFP) — World and Olympic 400m champion Michael Johnson and sprint king Maurice Greene will vie for centrestage when the European athletics Grand Prix circuit resumes here on Tuesday.

Organisers hope a string of world-class Americans will inspire the fans at the "Athletissima" meeting, with many of Europe's best sidestepping the event to recover from the just-concluded European Championships.

The men's sprints, with Greene, Trinidad's 200m world champion Ato Boldon and newly-crowned 200m African champion Frankie Fredericks to the fore, promise some fine action.

The one absence will be Canadian Olympic 100m champion Donovan Bailey, who is recovering after injury.

The women's 100m, however, will not see the match-up everybody would like to see — world champion Marion Jones of the United States, so dominant over the distance, against Christine Arron of France, a major star in the making after taking the European title in record time.

Arron, who also anchored the French 4x100m relay to gold, is due to rest after her heroics in Budapest and will be absent.

The top women's event is likely to come in the 400m hurdles, with American Kim Batten, the world record holder, taking on Jamaican Deon Hemmings, the Olympic champion, and Morocco's Nezha Bidouane, the world champion.

Other Olympic champions on show will be high hurdler Allen Johnson of the U.S., Russia's Svetlana Masterkova and Nourredine Morceli of Algeria.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSCH
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q. 1 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
AS QJ310S OA 100S AK984
- The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1c 1NT
What action do you take?
- A - With 10 points in high cards and good intermediates, the hand belongs to you. The surest way to get that message across to partner is to double. Naturally you intend to void the ace should the opponents attempt to run out.
- Q. 2 - Neither vulnerable as South you hold:
AT8S OA 10S42 OA AK983
- The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1c 1NT
What action do you take?
- A - At first glance it might seem that, with only seven high-card points and a singleton in partner's first-bid suit, you should pass. But your hand revolves to some 10 points in support of clubs, so a raise to three clubs is clear cut.
- Q. 3 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
AAK63 CAQ872 CAS AAS
- What is your opening bid?
- A - Although by the losing-trick count the hand contains only four losers, lack of body in the long suit is a flaw that makes the bidding unsuitable for a demand bid of two hearts. We would pretend one of our major-suit aces was in a minor and open two no trump. If that is too rich for your blood, start the ball rolling with one heart.
- Q. 4 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AAK63 CAQ872 CAS AAS
- The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1c 1NT
What do you bid now?
- A - A new suit by opener at the one level is not forcing, so South cannot afford to raise one heart. That leaves as the only option, in our opinion, a jump to two hearts though we know some who would jump to two no trump without being an eyelash.
- Q. 5 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
AS QJ310S OA 100S AK984
- Partner opens the bidding with one club. What do you respond?
- A - With only 13 high-card points and a singleton in partner's suit, it is a bit of a dilemma. However, if you don't jump shift now, you will never be able to convince partner of the trick-taking power of your holding without distorting the auction. Jump to two diamonds.
- Q. 6 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
AT8S CA 10S42 OA AK983
- The bidding has proceeded:
WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
3c 3NT 4NT 7
- What action do you take?
- A - Had there been no double, we would be thinking in terms of a possible slam. Now you should be content to play three no trump, and it is only a question of whether you should redouble. Since it is impossible to determine how many tricks four spades can be defeated should the opponents run, take the middle road and pass.
- Q. 6 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AAK63 CAQ872 CAS AAS
- The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1c 1NT 2c 2NT
- What do you bid now?
- A - A new suit by opener at the one level is not forcing, so South cannot afford to raise one heart. That leaves as the only option, in our opinion, a jump to two hearts though we know some who would jump to two no trump without being an eyelash.
- Q. 7 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AT8S CA 10S42 OA AK983
- The bidding has proceeded:
WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
3c 3NT 4NT 7
- What do you bid now?
- A - A new suit by opener at the one level is not forcing, so South cannot afford to raise one heart. That leaves as the only option, in our opinion, a jump to two hearts though we know some who would jump to two no trump without being an eyelash.

Pay-up or else warns Britain's Modahl

BUDAPEST (AFP) — Diane Modahl has given the bankrupt British Athletic Federation a seven-day ultimatum to come up with a satisfactory compensation figure or face further legal action.

Modahl is suing BAF, placed in administration last October with debts of around 2 million, after successfully fighting a four-year ban for 'failing' a drugs test and being sent home from the 1994 Commonwealth Games.

The 32-year-old, who had to sell her Sale home to fund the long-running legal battle, is suing for 800,000, although her lawyers have been negotiating with the Federation's administrators to reach a financial settlement.

The administrators cannot pay other creditors until a settlement with Modahl, who competed in the 800m for Britain at last week's European Championships in Budapest, is reached. "I have now instructed my lawyers that, in the absence of some sensible proposals from BAF, the case has to continue and a trial date has to be fixed at the first possible opportunity," said Modahl.

"The administrators have a clear choice. Either they persuade the other creditors to fund the legal costs of fighting the case to trial or they continue discussions with us with a view to resolving all outstanding issues."

"But I cannot be expected to keep my claim on hold and, so, as from

September 1, my lawyers will be taking the necessary steps to advance the proceedings."

Modahl, currently training in Switzerland for next month's Commonwealth Games in Malaysia, added: "The sensible outcome would be for the administration to be completed and for all the creditors to receive a distribution."

"I share the frustration and anger of the other creditors about the delay, but they have an opportunity at a meeting of their committee tomorrow to make some important decisions."

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA '1'	PHILADELPHIA '2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Fishman Yarns Theatre
	Robert Duwall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Leonardo Di Caprio...in THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	CONCORD '1' Robert Duwall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD '2' FATHER'S DAY Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria GODZILLA Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria CITY OF ANGELS Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM at 10:30 p.m.	WATCH OUT FOR THE NEW PLAY

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Swimming
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ic Committee pres-
Juan Antonio
anch of the AOC's in-
s and the proposal
be raised at next year's
conference or doping
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DGE

RIDGE QUIZ

1. Which of the following is not a type of fruit?
a) Apple b) Banana c) Carrot d) Orange

2. What is the capital of Australia?
a) Sydney b) Melbourne c) Canberra d) Perth

3. Which of the following is not a type of fish?
a) Shark b) Dolphin c) Whale d) Tuna

4. What is the largest city in Jordan?
a) Amman b) Zarqa c) Irbid d) Madaba

5. Which of the following is not a type of bird?
a) Eagle b) Falcon c) Owl d) Snake

6. What is the name of the Jordanian national basketball team?
a) Jordanians b) Hashemites c) Arabians d) Muslims

7. Which of the following is not a type of flower?
a) Rose b) Tulip c) Daisy d) Sunflower

8. What is the name of the Jordanian national football team?
a) Jordanians b) Hashemites c) Arabians d) Muslims

9. Which of the following is not a type of vegetable?
a) Carrot b) Potato c) Onion d) Tomato

10. What is the name of the Jordanian national tennis team?
a) Jordanians b) Hashemites c) Arabians d) Muslims



Britain's Steve Backley throws the javelin on his way to winning the gold medal at the European Track and Field Championships in Budapest (AP Photo)

Arron stars but Pole and Kipketer provide lasting images

BUDAPEST (AFP) — While French sprinter Christine Arron provided a much needed bit of class at the European championships, which ended here on Sunday, the lasting images were the contrasting fortunes of Polish 400 metres hurdles champion Pawel Januszewski, who had been read the last rites last November, and the utter despair of Denmark's 800 metres world-record holder Wilson Kipketer.

Januszewski, who ran a national record to overhaul race favourite Russian Maschenko in the final 20 metres, showed that coming so close to death leaves you with nothing to lose while Kipketer, who has lost four of the five races he has run in the last month, was evidently still weakened by his severe bout of malaria and could not summon up the reserves required to beat a poor class field.

While the Pole, who went into a coma last November after a car crash and still runs despite having a blood clot on the brain, never let himself believe he was going to be beaten the Kenyan-born naturalised-Dane's fragile confidence evaporated on the final bend and a brief contact with German winner Nils Schumann virtually saw him give up as he drifted back to eighth and last.

"I was told I would never walk again, but Poles never take no for an answer and once I had achieved that I thought anything was possible," Januszewski said.

Kipketer, who won the world indoor and outdoor titles last year and broke both the respective world records, had already had his doubts over his ability to win telling his coach that he was not happy nor satisfied and Schumann summed up the sudden fall in the great athlete's fortunes.

"The Kipketer of last year would not have cared about arm contact, he would still have won, he was just using that as an excuse," the 20-year-old said.

The 24-year-old Arron though was the individual star, with respect to Ireland's Sonia O'Sullivan who won the 5,000 metres and 10,000 metres, while the British team finished top of the medals table with nine golds, a fair feat considering their governing body is still in the hands of the administrators.

"If anyone has any doubts about Arron's ability to be a major challenger to Marion Jones, the current queen of world sprinting, then Russia's Irina Privalova will bear witness to her class, as twice the flame haired French girl overcame insurmountable deficits into shattering wins.

Arron, who enjoys what she calls no sort of relationship with her predecessor as French darling the 1996 double Olympic champion Marie-Jose Perec, came from five metres down to take both the 100 metres title and the European record off Privalova and then produced a performance that stunned the crowd in the relay as she came from 10 metres back to win by about five.

The confidence these performances have given to Arron, who like Perec was born on the French West Indies island of Guadeloupe, was clear in the way she approached the subject of beating Jones.

"I'm not obsessed by Jones but that's because I feel I am now capable of beating her without concentrating on what she's going to do. I still have things to improve on like my start but we are definitely neck and neck," she said.

While Arron brought what was much needed class to a French team that experienced a dreadful championships, gaining only one more medal than the far less well financed Irish team, the British experienced a

Seles wins 4th straight Canadian Open

MONTREAL (AFP) — Monica Seles won her fourth consecutive Canadian Open here Sunday with a straight sets 6-3, 6-2 victory over Spain's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario.

Sunday's final, however, proved an anti-climax with Seles showing the strain of having played a long semi-final on Saturday evening against world number one Martina Hingis, while Sanchez Vicario produced an error-ridden performance.

Seles broke early to take a 3-0 lead in the first set and started as strongly in the second set, breaking the Spaniard's serve in the opening game.

The only time Sanchez Vicario looked like making a comeback was in the sixth game of the second set, but she squandered two opportunities to break serve.

Seles' match-winning shot, which trickled over the net cord, summed up the match. Seles said it had not been her "most stylish" performance.

The American first won the Canadian Open in 1995, when she chose the event to make her return to international first-class tennis after her enforced lay-off from being stabbed in Germany by a crazed fan.

The Spaniard has won the Canadian Open twice, the last time in 1992 when she defeated Seles in the final.

Perkins in dilemma over disrupted training for KL Games

BRISBANE (AFP) — Australia's dual Olympic gold medalist Kieren Perkins is yet again having a troubled buildup to a major swimming meet.

The triple world record holder is concerned he may burn out if he resumes training too hard soon after an energy-sapping illness in the countdown to next month's Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games.

Perkins is in a dilemma to try to make up lost ground after missing last week's training which could give compatriot and Perth world champion Grant Hackett the edge in their Malaysian 1500m freestyle showdown.

Perkins was struck down with influenza after recording the second fastest 800m freestyle in the world this year suggesting he was on his way to his best form for the Malaysian meet.

"The biggest problem we've got at the moment is that if I get back into it too hard, too fast, I could have a relapse," Perkins, 25, said here Monday.

Perkins will join other members of Australia's 41-strong Games swimming team in Perth Tuesday for three days before heading to Singapore for an 11-day camp to acclimatise before flying to KL.

The triple world record-holder won the last Commonwealth 1500m title in Canada in dramatic fashion, setting two world records in the one race — for 800m and 1500m — four years on, both records still stand.

Perkins missed out on qualifying for this year's world championships and just scraped into the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games team, where he swam one of his most courageous races to take gold in the 1500m freestyle.

Jordan's basketball team leaves for Taipei Thursday

Iraqi team arrives for friendly matches

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Iraqi national basketball team arrived here Monday to play two friendlies against their Jordanian counterparts before the Kingdom's men's team leaves for Chinese Taipei Thursday to take part in the William Jones International Tournament.

Originally, 16 teams from around the world were to take part in the week-long tournament, but have dropped to ten. Jordans now joins nine teams representing Asia in addition to the Costa Rican team which has replaced China.

The participating teams have been divided into two groups. The first includes Jordan, Chinese Taipei, UAE, Korea, Malaysia while Group 2 includes Japan, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines and Costa Rica.

The top two teams in each group will play in the semi-finals while the rest will play for 5th-10th places.

Tournament regulations stipulate that the host team qualifies to the semifinals, regardless of its results in the preliminary round.

This adds a burden on Jordan which has to win Group 1 to ensure qualification since taking second place in case Taipei does not take first place will drop Jordan out of contention because Taipei will then qualify with the first placed team.

Jordan opens its matches against Taipei Aug. 31 and then plays the UAE, Korea and Malaysia.

The Kingdom was placed seventh in the last Asian Basketball Championship which was held in Saudi Arabia last year.

The team's head coach Murad Barakat was quoted as saying he was happy with the team's training and performance in last week's training camp in Athens.

The team played six matches winning two and losing the rest.

Jordan Basketball Federation officials Tuesday declined to name the final lineup of the national team, probably awaiting the outcome of the matches against Iraq to name the final 12.

The team includes mainly under-22 players and are joined by veterans Hilal Barakat and Yousef Zaghoul who have recently rejoined the team.

The lineup also includes Faisal Nsour, Fadi Sagga, Naser Alawach, Naser Bassam, Jan Sahlieh, Ayman Du'eis, Ma'an Odeh, Husam Lutfi, Ashraf Samara, and Yousef Abu Bakr.

Jordan's match schedule	
Aug. 31	Jordan-Taipei
Sept. 1	Jordan-UAE
Sept. 2	Jordan-Korea
Sept. 3	Jordan-Malaysia
Sept. 4	7-8th places
	9-10th places
	Semifinals
Sept. 5	5-6th places
	3-4th places
	Final match

Participants gear up for Rumman Hill Climb

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The International Rumman Hill Climb is set for Aug. 28 with over 50 professional drivers participating in the country's most popular auto event organised by the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ).

Several famous names from England, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan will drive the three-kilometre, 27-curve path trying to break the two-minute barrier set by His Majesty King Hussein in 1989 in his Mercedes 190 with a time of 2 minutes 42 seconds.

King Hussein broke his own record in 1996 with a time of 1:57.28.

Jordan's Speed Tests Championship leader Yasser Jarrar who leads with 85 points will be the country's favourite along with Jordan's Rumman Hill Climb champion Ahmad Daoud.

Daoud took first place in the qualifying National Rumman Hill Climb last May clocking 2:11.63 in his Ford Cosworth. Jarrar came second with 2:15:06 in his Renault 5 Turbo.

Yasser Jarrar in his Renault GT Turbo

Jordanian drivers will face some tough competition from the Arab World. Lebanon's champion Nabil Karam in his Lancia Delta is another contender as this is not Karam's first try to conquer the bill.

UAE's Salem Ben Shiban in his Ford Escort Cosworth, and Lebanon's Fadi Hayek in his Ford Sierra Cosworth will also test their skills.

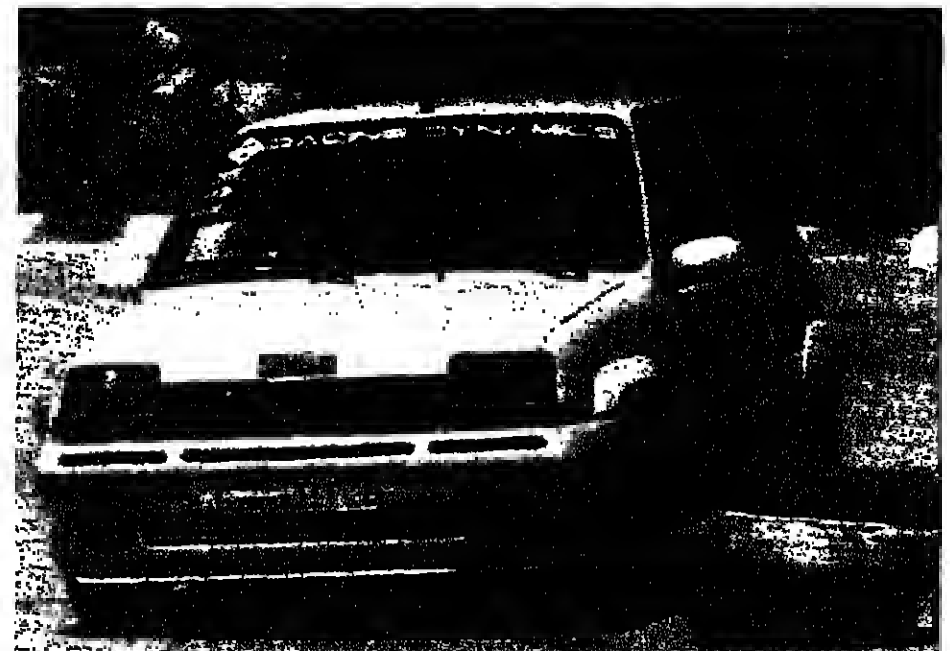
The female touch will also be there with Jordan's Maya Mufti — the only female participant — in her Triumph TR8. She will try to take advantage of skills she learnt during her last participation in Lebanon's Rally du Printemps in May with Lebanese co-driver Hala Nasser Al Din in a Nissan Pulsar.

Jordan's Fares Bustami who came fourth in the last National Rumman Hill Climb will also take part in the event.

The hill climb takes place 17-km north of Amman just off the Jerash highway, two kilometres north of Rumman village.

The event will be held under the Patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Faisal who will present the champions with prizes at a special ceremony Friday evening.

Meanwhile, RACJ will hold a dinner Wednesday in honour of participants, officials and the media.



Corretja topples Agassi for RCA title

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) — Spain's Alex Corretja, his fighting spirit rallied by an accidental second-set knockdown, upset Andre Agassi 2-6, 6-2, 6-3 here Sunday to win the \$1 million RCA Championship.

Corretja, seeded sixth, fell to the court as he was struck by an Agassi return in the sixth game of the second set.

The fifth-seeded American rushed over to help his opponent up. But afterwards, it was Agassi who went on the slide. Corretja clinched his third title of the year after three sets lasting one hour, 58 minutes.

"It was an accident and I did break him in that game," Corretja said of the incident. "But next time I'd prefer to break him normally."

The victory was the first in America for Corretja, who will break back into the Top 10 on Monday, just in time for Wednesday's draw for the U.S. Open, the final Grand Slam of the year that opens August 31 in New York.

"I played great tennis to beat him, I've beaten top guys barcourt before," said the 24-year-old from Barcelona. "After the first set, I just waited."

"I thought that if he could play that well, he would deserve to win easily. But in the second set I realised I was playing deeper and he was not hitting as hard."

"I couldn't do anything at the start. He was playing perfect tennis."

Agassi was stung by the failure to earn his third title of the summer, following hardcourt victories in Washington and Los Angeles.

"I had a lot of chances, but I hit come returns short. That's not going to get the job done. Agassi said of the third game in the final set when he had four chances to break the Spaniard.

"It just slipped away. He played a pretty good game to break me and that was all she wrote. I have no complaints about where my game is. You can't expect to play well all of the time. But I feel I can go into the U.S. Open playing well."

Agassi took early control with two breaks for a 3-0 lead in brilliant summer sunshine and temperatures approaching 30 C.

The fifth seed thrilled a partisan crowd as he earned a break point the hard way in the third game — by winning a point which included a backwards between-the-legs return which landed good.



Germany's Lars Reidel prepares to throw on his way to winning then gold medal in the Men's Discus at the European Track and Field Championships in Budapest (AP Photo)

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Netherlands agrees to host Lockerbie trial

Agencies

THE DUTCH government on Monday said it would cooperate fully with Britain and the United States over the possibility of trying the two suspected Lockerbie bombers in the Netherlands.

"The Council of Ministers has today decided to cooperate with a request from the American and British governments to have the trial of the two Libyans suspected of the Lockerbie bombing conducted in the Netherlands," the Dutch government said in a statement.

"The trial will be held in a place to be decided later by a Scottish court and in accordance with Scottish law," the cabinet added.

In a radical change of position, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced on Monday that the two countries agreed that the trial could be held in The Hague before a Scottish court, with Scottish judges applying

Scottish law.

Two Libyan agents are accused of masterminding the attack on the U.S.-bound Pan Am Boeing 747 flight from London on Dec. 21, 1988 which blew up over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people, including 11 on the ground.

The U.N. Security Council imposed a ban on arms sales and flights to the north African country in 1992 after it refused to hand over the suspects — Abdul Baset Ali Mohammed El Megrahi and Al Amine Khalifa Fhimah — for trial.

But Tripoli has refused to wilt under the pressure, saying it cannot hand over the men as it has no extradition treaty with Britain or the United States and that Libya doubts that the suspects would get a fair trial in either country.

The Dutch government said it had accepted to host the trial in "the cause of international law as well as international peace and security."

"A trial will represent an important contribution to the fight against terrorism," the statement added.

Already a host to the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the future International Criminal Court, the trial "will also strengthen the Netherlands' position as a centre for international law," the government pointed out.

Meanwhile, the United States announced it would press for international oil sanctions on Libya if it failed to hand over the two suspects, a senior U.S. official said on Monday.

The official said Washington had always favoured a multilateral oil embargo but believed other countries would now be more willing to go along if Tripoli rejected a compromise proposal announced on Monday for the trial of the suspects.

Taleban: Ben Laden far away when missiles hit

MIRANSHAH (R) — Islamist militant Osama Ben Laden was a long way from the camps struck by U.S. cruise missiles in Afghanistan last week, a senior figure in the Afghan Taleban movement said.

"Osama was not even within a 500-kilometre radius of the attack. The cruise missile attack was like killing a fly with a cannon," Mullah Jaluddin Haqqani told a Reuters reporter who returned on Monday from the Pakistan frontier close to the area hit by the missiles.

Haqqani, a minister of borders in the Taleban administration, said on Saturday that Arab members of guerrilla groups abandoned their camps before the Tomahawk cruise missiles struck last Thursday and Pakistani and Kashmiri fighters took the heaviest casualties in the attack.

"All the Arabs were aware of a possible attack. There were only guards there when the cruise missiles hit their camp. Most of the people who died in the attack were Pakistanis or Kashmiris," he said.

Haqqani, who has been based in Miranshah on the Pakistan side of the border ever since the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, said only one Arab was killed.

The U.S. missile attack, carried out to avenge 263 people killed by bomb blasts at its embassies in East Africa earlier this month, killed 21 people and wounded 53.

The U.S. says Ben Laden's groups are responsible for the

blasts in Kenya and Tanzania.

Supreme Taleban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar ordered Ben Laden to stop making threatening statements against the U.S. following the missile strikes, and according to an Afghan Islamic Press report on Monday the Saudi dissident has agreed to obey.

But threats still flew from others sympathetic to Ben Laden's jihad, holy war, against the U.S.

"We won't shut down these camps. We will allow more so that the Muslims should fight for their rights and against the gangsterism of America," Haqqani said.

He said the Taleban, which controls 90 per cent of Afghanistan, will support all the oppressed Muslims whether they are in Sudan, Kenya or anywhere else.

Residents of Miranshah, a tribal town, 240 km southwest of Peshawar, the provincial capital of Pakistan's north west frontier, witnessed the bloody results of the U.S. attack as dozens of wounded were ferried to the town from the camps across the border.

Eight guerrillas were dead on arrival. Most of the wounded have left the town, but one remaining victim recounted the moment a missile struck his camp.

"I was on guard duty. I heard something like a whistle of a jet over my head and then explosions. Something struck me and I fell down," Furqan Bhatti, 20, a militant of Jamiatul

Mujahideen said.

"Then help came and I was put on a van for Pakistan," he added.

Pakistani guards at a nearby border post remembered night being turned to day when the missiles crashed into the camps in the mountains near Khost on the Afghan side.

"There were four explosions. They came a minute after each other. Each time the sky and nearby land lit up like it was day as if the sun has come out unexpectedly," said Subedar Umer.

Hayat, 34, who was in charge of the outpost that night. A guard at another checkpoint a few hundred metres closer to the frontier recalled the terror of the noise. "Dhuk...dhuk...dhuk. The sound was horrifying. We have no bunkers so we cowered in a corner of our post and sat silently wondering what to do," Khadar Eid Rehman said.

A couple of hours later trucks carrying wounded Islamic militants began crossing the border. The wounded were followed by dozens of empty-handed young men running towards the buses.

"Most of these Pakistanis were inside the camp at the time of the attack," a local resident said. "Some who had superficial injuries immediately boarded buses for their hometowns," he added.

"You could see the fear and frustration in their eyes. They fled the camps empty-handed. Some were even without shoes," Murtaza Khan, a shopkeeper said.

American embassies' bombing suspects 'to be tried in U.S.'

NAIROBI (AFP) — Key suspects in the Nairobi U.S. embassy bomb attack will be tried in the United States, according to a Kenyan newspaper report here Monday, as the investigation appeared to be making more progress.

The East African Standard, quoting unnamed senior Kenyan police sources, said that the police who have been working closely with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on the case, agreed that the principal accused should have a U.S. trial.

The rival Nation newspaper for its part reported opposition Kenyan leaders as calling for the arrested suspects to be tried in the United States.

Former Vice-President Mwai Kibaki, head of the Democratic Party and official opposition leader, said there was an extradition treaty allowing this, and that Kenya had not the means to ensure counter-terrorist security during a protracted trial.

The unconfirmed Standard report said that as soon as the investigation leads to criminal charges being preferred, the suspects would be "transferred to the United States under international law."

A total 257 people died and

more than 5,000 were wounded by two massive car bomb explosions, reportedly organised by Islamists, at the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam on August 7.

In retaliation the United States launched cruise missile attacks Thursday on an alleged terrorist facility south of Kabul in Afghanistan and a pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum, Sudan.

The chief suspect is Mohammed Sadiq Howaida, a Palestinian arrested in Karachi, the day of the explosions.

He was deported to Nairobi after reportedly telling Pakistani officials that he organised the attacks on behalf of a group run by millionaire Saudi Islamist Osama Ben Laden.

According to the Nation Monday, investigators are almost certain that the Nairobi bomb was carried on a flatbed Toyota Dyna 200 pickup truck — a vehicle with a carrying capacity of about a tonne.

The weekly East African meanwhile front-paged colour pictures of two prime suspects held in Nairobi: Howaida and a Yemeni named Khalid Salim.

Salim was the subject of an identification parade last week to find the man who threw a

grenade at the embassy at the time of the attack. But contrary to an earlier report, there now appears to be some doubt over his positive identification by witnesses.

A third suspect, a Lebanese named Abdullah Nache, was seen filming the U.S. embassy four days before the attacks, according to witnesses, the weekly also said.

FBI agents descended in force on a cheap hotel in Nairobi last Tuesday to examine a room where the bombers are believed to have prepared the huge explosive charge in the days immediately before the blasts.

On the question of where the trial of suspects would be held, the East African said Kenyan officials had hinted that they would not object to it being held in another country, including the United States.

FBI director Louis Freeh, who visited Dar Es Salaam and Nairobi last week in connection with the attacks, gave no public indication on this point. He met Kenya's Attorney-General Amos Wako, among others.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright also visited Tanzania and Kenya last week because of the bomb attacks.



MASS MARRIAGE SPONSORED BY BUSINESS: A line of sixteen Jordanian couples sit for a photo in Amman, late night Sunday. A mass wedding organised to help poorer families overcome exorbitant wedding expenses by sharing the costs of a lavish party, partly sponsored by local businesses (Reuters photo)

Israel to spend \$3m on Hebron settlement of seven families

Israel detains dozens for curfew violation in Hebron

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Israeli government has budgeted \$3 million to build permanent houses in a radical Jewish settlement in Hebron which now includes only mobile homes, officials said Monday.

Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, the leading nationalist hard-liner in government, informed settlers in Hebron of details of the building plan late Sunday night, the officials said.

The new housing will go up in the Hebron Jewish enclave of Tel Rumeida where a 63-year-old rabbi was stabbed to death by a Palestinian Thursday night.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet decided Sunday in response to the killing to authorise construction of the permanent housing at Tel Rumeida, home to only seven families who include the most radical members of the Hebron settler community.

The cabinet provided no details of the building plan but Sharon told Tel Rumeida residents late Sunday that \$3 million would be spent.

David Wilder, a spokesman for the 400 Jewish settlers living in Hebron, said they wanted a three-story building with 70 housing units placed at Tel Rumeida, but government officials would not say how many new homes were planned.

Radical Jewish settlers created Tel Rumeida 14 years ago

and demanded Israeli troops have detained dozens of Palestinians for violating a curfew imposed on parts of Hebron following the murder of a local Jewish settler, Palestinian sources said Monday.

A number of those picked up on Sunday and Monday were fined \$135 for leaving their homes in the sector of Hebron which remains under Israeli control, they said.

The army announced meanwhile that 6,000 Hebron Palestinian merchants and labourers who hold permits to work inside Israel would be allowed to leave the city beginning Monday.

The army sealed off all of Hebron and imposed a curfew on the Israeli-controlled sector of the city after a 63-year-old Jewish settler was stabbed to death in his home inside a Jewish settler enclave Thursday night.

Four-fifths of Hebron, a city of 120,000, was transferred to Palestinian rule in January 1997. The other fifth, which remains under full Israeli

control, includes enclaves where some 400 zealous Jewish settlers live alongside 15,000 Palestinians.

The army lifted the curfew in its sector for two hours Sunday evening to allow Palestinian residents to purchase essentials.

But when the Palestinians left their homes to shop, they were attacked by several dozen settlers who pelted them with eggs and vegetables and overturned merchant stands and carts.

Palestinians responded by hurling stones and bottles at the settlers in a fierce free-for-all until Israeli soldiers intervened to separate the two sides.

Some 100 Israelis from the far-right Women in Green movement on Monday held a solidarity march from the Jewish quarter of Hebron to Tel Rumeida, the settler enclave where Rabbi Shlomo Raanan was stabbed last week.

Israel retracted the decision. Following the murder Thursday of Rabbi Shlomo Raanan, the Israeli army imposed a curfew on Arab neighbourhoods surrounding the Jewish quarter and which remained under Israeli control when the rest of Hebron was granted autonomy in January 1997.

Jewish settlers attacked Palestinian residents and traders late Sunday when the curfew was lifted for two

hours so families could stock up on supplies, witnesses said. About 15,000 Palestinians are affected by the curfew.

Settler youths pelted Palestinian merchants and shoppers with eggs and vegetables and burned one car during the pause in the curfew, while Palestinians responded by throwing stones, witnesses said.

Israeli soldiers eventually intervened to separate the two sides but residents said the city remained tense on Monday.

King Fahd readmitted to hospital

DUBAI (AFP) — Saudi King Fahd has been readmitted to hospital with "minor complications" four days after he was discharged following the removal of his gall bladder, diplomats in Saudi Arabia said Monday.

Both Western and Arab diplomats said the king had been readmitted to hospital early Friday and was still there.

One diplomat, speaking by telephone from Riyadh, said the king was admitted to hospital suffering from "minor complications" following the gall bladder operation.

"We think it was a fairly routine thing — he needed to have some fluid drained or there was some sort of infection. We assume he's still in hospital," the diplomat said.

The diplomat said he thought King Fahd had been admitted into the King Faisal Specialist Hospital in Riyadh, the best equipped medical centre in the kingdom, where the original operation was carried out. There was no official confirmation from the royal palace on the king's health and a palace spokesman would only say "the king is in good health."

Journalists in Riyadh reported that the King Faisal Specialist Hospital had none of the usual security measures implemented when the king is there.

A surgeon told AFP that the most likely "minor complication" following the removal of a gall bladder was a slight infection, which happens in about five per cent of cases.

This could be cleared up in about four to five days using antibiotics.

A fluid build-up was rarer and the procedure would vary from drug treatment to surgical intervention depending on the severity of the build-up and whether or not it was infected, the surgeon said.

Recovery time in less serious cases would be between a week and 10 days, but might be much longer for older or frailer patients with more serious cases, he said.

King Fahd was discharged from hospi-

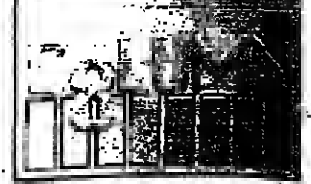
tal August 18 after undergoing two surgical procedures including the removal of his gall bladder.

The king, who is in his late 70s, was originally hospitalised August 2 to have pus removed from his abdomen under local anaesthetic following an inflammation of the colon. A stone had already been removed from the king's bile duct in May 1994.

The king was also hospitalised in March this year with an inflamed gall bladder. In 1995, King Fahd was hospitalised after suffering a stroke, from which it took him many months to recover.

The king, believed to have been born in 1921, has reigned for 16 years over a country which is the world's largest petroleum producer and exporter, and holds a quarter of its oil reserves.

The king is rated by the U.S. business magazine Forbes as one of the world's richest men.



Mike Wallace gets intimidated

DULUTH (AP) — Newsman Mike Wallace has stared down world leaders and warlords. It took a 23-year-old baseball pitcher to intimidate him. Wallace was in town for a "60 Minutes" story about Ila Borders, the first woman to win a game in a men's league professional game. In their initial encounter Friday, Borders' intense pre-game stare sent the veteran reporter into retreat. "She had her game face on. I saw her in the locker room and I didn't say anything to her. She looked at me like I was a hair in her soup," Wallace said.

Prince Charles seeks treatment for memory loss

LONDON (AFP) — Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, has consulted a specialist on memory loss because he now has trouble remembering the names of people he meets on official engagements, The Sun newspaper reported Monday.

"During his official engagements, he is introduced to a wide range of people and he has noticed that he later forgets their names. All the specialist is doing is helping him remember those names," the paper said.

Schroder replaces Smits in 'NYPD Blue'

NEW YORK (AP) — Ready for his new job on "NYPD Blue," former child star Rick Schroder learned from some 'real' Big Apple cops. Riding along with police, Schroder recently spent a day racing around New York, visiting the sites of two homicides, a suicide, the city morgue and watching undercover "buy-and-bust" narcotics operations. "It was intense and extensive," Schroder said in Sunday's Daily News. "These guys do a hell of a job." Fans of the gritty TV crime drama weren't the only ones surprised by the casting of Schroder, 28, to replace Jimmy Smits.

Libya will respond to U.S. proposal to try to resolve the 1988 Pan Am bombing over Lockerbie, Libya's official news agency said Tuesday.

The foreign affairs and justice ministers and their experts are very busy studying the case sent by the U.S. and other governments via the U.N. secretary-general," the agency said, quoting an official.

Advanced statement will be published tomorrow (Wednesday) on this subject," JAN said.

Arab League chief Esmat Meguid said Tuesday that Libya would accept the offer to try two Libyan suspects in the Lockerbie bombing 10 years ago in the Hague.

Asked whether Libya would accept Monday's proposal, Meguid said: "This is not foreseeable because the

Security Council

Hitchcock stamp offered to the public

HITCHCOCK (AP) — What's in a name? A lot of work for the post office in tiny Hitchcock, which is getting hundreds of requests from stamp collectors to hand-cancel stamps and commemorative envelopes honouring movie director Alfred Hitchcock.

Postmaster Kathy Price hand-cancels the Hitchcock postage stamps with a special ink stamp that prints out the movie director's famous profile and the words "Suspense Station: Hitchcock, S.D. 57348, August 4, 1998." That was the first day that the U.S. Postal Service offered the Hitchcock stamp to the public.

Jaws scare sees shark on menu

ATHENS (AFP) — The Greek town of Potidea celebrated the capture of a four-metre long shark that had terrorised beach-goers by throwing a party Sunday with sharkmeat at the top of the menu. The shark, which weighed 300 kilograms, caused panic Saturday after baring a floating safety net off the beach in north-eastern Greece where thousands of people were bathing. After a 24-hour shark hunt, local fishermen finally fatally wounded and captured the shark Sunday and dragged it into the beach.

King Fahd

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